

THE ARCHITECTURE OF SAMUEL CHARLES FARR 1827-1918

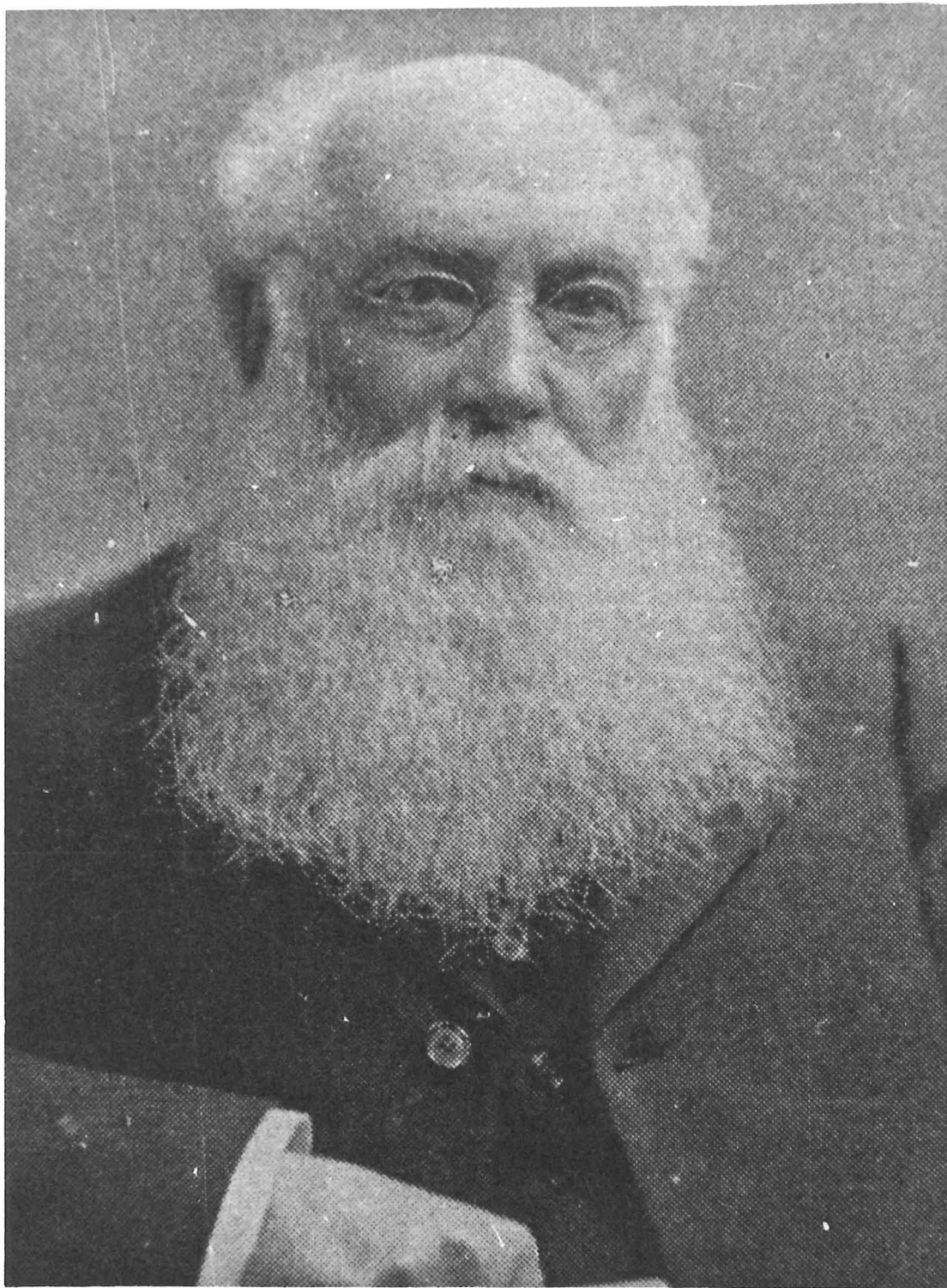
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A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the Degree  
of  
Master of Arts in Art History  
in the  
University of Canterbury  
by  
P.R. Wilson

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University of Canterbury

1982



FRONTISPIECE

Samuel Charles Farr, 1827-1918.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful thanks must first be given to my University of Canterbury supervisors. Jonathan Mané initiated my interest in Victorian and Colonial architecture and suggested I might study Samuel Farr. Dr Ian Lochhead's advice and constructive criticism was encouraging and beneficial. Mr and Mrs A.H.P. Farr, Wellington, willingly provided me with invaluable material from their collection of family papers. Their son Graeme, who has also made a study of his great great grandfather's career as part of his degree in architecture, kindly shared information with me, though we were able to work independently to reach our own conclusions.

The advice and assistance of people skilled in research was particularly helpful. Special thanks are due to the staff of the New Zealand Collection at the Canterbury Public Library and Richard Greenaway's continued interest in Samuel Farr was appreciated. Similar help was given by the librarians and archivists at the Canterbury Museum, the Alexander Turnbull Library and the Auckland University Architectural Library. In Akaroa, Mrs Lois Holderness at the Museum, and Miss Jessie Mould generously shared their knowledge and enthusiasm. I wish to thank my niece, Janet Armstrong who visited Baldock, Hertfordshire, where she established contact with local historians and gathered further material.

Useful information was also given by Messrs J. Hendry, D.M. Sheppard, E. McGregor, C. McGeorge, and R.B. Keey, Christchurch and Mr D. Barr, Sumner. I have enjoyed discussing the homes Farr built with their present owners and am grateful for the assistance given by Mr and Mrs B. Nimmo, Mrs Maw, Mrs M. Twomey, Mr R.M.D. Johnson, Mr I. Wilson, Mr D. Gould, Mr and Mrs B. Coe, Mrs D. Lee, Mr I. Clarke, Mrs Dann, Mrs V. Limic, Miss E. Webb, and Mrs J.M. Bremner. My appreciation goes to Mrs Henderson and Mrs Thirkettle at St. Paul's Trinity-Pacific church for their assistance. The University of Canterbury Photographic Department processed the illustrations and Mrs B. Carter typed the text.

My husband John mastered the intricacies of research at the Land Office and has become like me, an ardent admirer of Samuel Farr. My final thanks for patience, support, and encouragement, go to him and my family.

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## ABSTRACT

Samuel Farr, who came to Christchurch in April 1850 before the planned settlement of the province began, spent twelve years in Akaroa proving an adaptable, versatile colonist before he moved to Christchurch to embark on a career as an architect. His success in competitions, helped establish his practice and his involvement in a wide variety of civic and church activities introduced him to an expanding circle of influential clients. He was competent and inventive, able to meet his clients' needs in costs and style, but was not of the stature of Mountfort or Armson. While his buildings were not outstanding they were highly esteemed by his contemporaries and are worthy of study because they are representative of colonial taste and contributed to the development of Christchurch's architectural character.

As complete a list as possible of his work has been compiled, chiefly from newspaper references, in order that his buildings can be discussed within the overall context of his own development, the Canterbury architectural environment and the wider sphere of Victorian architecture. The first chapter is largely biographical, outlining Farr's background in England, activities in Akaroa and developing career and other interests in Christchurch. In the following chapters his work in different categories of building is described and assessed more fully, showing his attitudes to current theories and practices in architecture, his approach to design and his interpretation of architectural styles for colonial conditions. An appendix tabulates his known works.

The purpose of the study has been to provide a comprehensive picture of this nineteenth-century colonist's architectural career.

## CHAPTER ONE

## LIFE AND CAREER

On the 5th March 1850, the ship Monarch lost its rudder in a severe storm outside Hobart harbour. For thirteen days it drifted south-east before the wind, until the fixing of a temporary rudder allowed the course to be set once more for its planned destination, Auckland. While sailing up Otago's coast on the 24th March the rudder was again lost, placing the ship and its passengers in serious danger of being blown onto the rocky coastline. However, luck and the weather favoured them so that on the 2nd April the Monarch was able to find its way into Akaroa harbour and Samuel Charles Farr set foot on New Zealand soil.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in this accidental fashion, Canterbury acquired its first architect.

Canterbury, in April 1850, provided Farr with no immediate vision of golden prospects for an architectural career. The settlement, planned by the Canterbury Association to reproduce English society in miniature, was yet to begin in Lyttelton and on the plains where Captain Thomas was busy supervising the construction of essential buildings and roads. The first four ships with their migrant passengers (including Benjamin Woolfield Mountfort, the settlement's semi-official and first practising architect) would not arrive for another eight and a half months, but Farr was prepared to place his trust in the future potential of the province.<sup>2</sup> His original plan to settle in Auckland was abandoned in favour of

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1. S.C. Farr, 'Peninsula and Plain', Canterbury Old and New, pp.37-38. A longer account, first published in the Akaroa Mail in 1877 is related in H.C. Jacobsen Stories of Banks Peninsula, pp.109-115.
  2. For a general background about Canterbury's settlement see Sir James Hight and C.E. Straubel (eds.). History of Canterbury, 3 Vols, Christchurch, 1957-71, Vol.1.

remaining in Akaroa to try pioneering life, whatever it should offer. It was twelve years before he moved to Christchurch to recommence the profession for which he had trained.

All types of commissions came Farr's way. He designed houses, shops, offices, warehouses, halls, schools and churches of simple character or of a grander nature to suit his clients' wishes and means. There was no specific architectural style which he favoured and he typifies the nineteenth century architect who was able to design competently in any style which he or his client considered appropriate for the purpose of the building.

Farr's architecture provides a representative example of the colonial adaptations to Victorian styles which were most favoured in Christchurch's early decades. He was not an outstanding architect like Mountfort, whose high-principled interpretation of Gothic forms bestowed on Christchurch much of its distinct architectural character, but he was one of the capable group of early architects whose contributions played an essential role. A study of Farr's work is valuable for the insight it provides into what was standard in early Canterbury architecture - what the average man chose to build. Farr was able to achieve inventive, even eccentric designs when the occasion demanded them and could also satisfy his clients with convenient, functionally planned buildings where architectural dignity and distinction were provided within specific price ranges. Although he was not especially innovative, he kept abreast of contemporary stylistic trends and building techniques.

In his undoubted ingenuity, his readiness to overcome any problems which presented themselves and his adaptability to meet New Zealand conditions in his life style and in the practice of his profession, he

can be seen as a splendid fore-runner of the inventive, self-sufficient New Zealander. In the diverse range of activities with which he involved himself to benefit the fledgling province's development, he can be seen to exemplify the ideal colonist.

Samuel Farr was born in Baldock, Hertfordshire on 18th February 1827, the same year as William Burgess, two years after James Brookes and William White and three years after George Edmund Street. Richard Norman Shaw and Philip Webb were born in 1831. Farr was the second child and oldest son of John Everett (or Everard) and Hannah Maria Farr, both of whom had been born and lived most of their lives within the Baldock parish which had a population of 1,920 at the time of the 1851 census.<sup>3</sup> John Farr was an astute man and though his profession in 1828 was given as carpenter, he advertised himself and his skills under the headings Bricklayer (one of three), Carpenter and Joiner (one of six) and Wireworker (one) on a three-quarter page listing of trades and professions for Baldock in Pigott's Directory 1831, when he was twenty seven years old. By this date his wife, a year his senior, had born him four children - Georgiana, Samuel, Arthur and Robert. George and Felix were still to come. In an 1839 directory he was not only advertising himself as Bricklayer, Carpenter, Joiner and Wireworker but also as Builder which was his stated occupation for the 1841 and 1851 census records.

By 1918 John Farr's New Zealand descendants described him as

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3. Information relating to the Farr family has been gleaned from the 1841 and 1851 census microfilms for Baldock, supplied by the Church of The Latter Day Saints, in Christchurch. Additional information was compiled by the County Librarian and the County Archivist, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Hertford.

'architect', an appellation which resulted either from misunderstanding or possibly from a desire to enhance the social status of their forebear.<sup>4</sup> In the nineteenth century there was nothing to prevent a man calling himself architect even when he had received no formal training. It was usual for a man aspiring to become an architect to article himself as pupil in an established office for five years, but this was not essential. William Butterfield, one of Victorian England's greatest architects, trained for a time under an ordinary Pimlico builder and was '... to all intents and purposes self-taught'.<sup>5</sup>

It has been impossible to discover what formal architectural training Samuel Farr received. In some autobiographical notes written in 1916 he writes of his first experiences in Akaroa and states '... my training and profession were those of an architect.'<sup>6</sup> The R.I.B.A. have been unable to find him or his father listed in any of their indexes, directories or standard works of reference, and it seems probable in view of the family's close links with the building trade that he worked, at least for a time, with his father.<sup>7</sup> In 1851, John Farr, employing five men, was the most important builder listed in the Baldock census. At this date two of Samuel's brothers Arthur, aged twenty-two, and George, aged nineteen, are shown as carpenter and joiner and by 1862 Arthur was listing

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4. S.C. Farr's death certificate.

5. J. Summerson, Heavenly Mansions, New York, 1963, p.160. Further discussion about Butterfield's training in P. Thompson, William Butterfield, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971, p.58-9, and general information about the development of professional registered status for architects by F. Jenkins, 'The Victorian Architectural Profession', Victorian Architecture, ed. P. Ferriday. London, 1963, pp.37-49.

6. S.C. Farr, 'The Story of Samuel Charles Farr', 1916. Unpublished family notes possessed by A.H.P. Farr, Wellington.

7. The 1841 census records Robert Farr, Hitchin Street, Baldock, aged 57, a carpenter and his son James, 28, a bricklayer. These were John Farr's father and brother, and probably Frederick Farr, of High Street Baldock, 25 years, a builder, was another brother. Trade listings show members of the Farr family associated with building to the end of the century.

himself as a builder. By 1873 however George Farr was living in London, his occupation Surgeon and Robert (who does not appear in Baldock's 1851 census) had migrated to U.S.A. practising in Hockensack, New Jersey, as a dentist. The fact that such training was provided for these younger members of the family suggests the possibility of an equal training being available for Samuel. The family's financial position seems to have been comparatively secure, as Hannah Maria brought £800 to her marriage settlement in 1824 and the final legacy to be divided by the six children after their father's death in 1873 was £1509.13.6.

It may be therefore, that Samuel trained in an architect's office in a neighbouring region, or in London, approximately fifty miles distant from Baldock, at some stage between 1842 and 1849. He had certainly visited London at least twice before his departure for New Zealand and could have had a good idea of architectural activities there. There is every likelihood that he or some member of his family subscribed to a journal such as The Builder, 1842 - from which comprehensive knowledge of current architectural theories and practice could be gleaned.

Whether or not Farr formally served a five year architectural apprenticeship, he had the opportunity to acquire a thorough grounding in all practical aspects of building and there was ample material from which he could study the principles of architectural design. It can be assumed that when Farr, aged twenty-two, made the decision to migrate to New Zealand, he had confidence in his knowledge, skills and capabilities to practice as an architect. He would have had a broad general understanding of the contemporary English building scene and a greater familiarity with the architecture of his home environment.

Central Baldock has changed little since 1849, so it is possible to



obtain a reasonable impression of the buildings which may have influenced him.<sup>8</sup> Predominant are the attractive red brick Georgian houses which face the square. St. Mary's, the fourteenth century church in which Farr was baptised, is built chiefly of flint with some portions of stone. In 1831 the Farr family's connection with the Baldock Congregational Church began, and John Farr could well have been involved in the erection of their chapel in Pond Street some time in this decade.<sup>9</sup> The severely plain red brick building had twenty feet high walls with small paned square windows on three sides. Typically non-conformist in plan, it featured a centrally placed pulpit at the east end and a gallery for additional accommodation at the west.

Mr John Rider, an historian in Baldock, has searched without success for evidence of buildings erected by John Farr. He suggests that because he was a dissenter, he may not have been considered eligible for prestigious orders or contracts.

By 1851, John and Hannah Farr were living at 41 High Street across from a well preserved block of six brick Almshouses, which, though built in 1621, feature Victorian barge-boarding on their dormer windows and gabled porches. Fifteen to twenty miles from Baldock is the splendid Jacobean mansion, *Hatfield House*, 1607-12.<sup>10</sup> Writing of his trip to England, 1884-5, on Acclimatisation Society business Farr mentions revisiting this house which he had, 'known well as a boy'.<sup>11</sup> One can

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8. N. Pevsner, The Buildings of England, Hertfordshire. Harmondsworth, England, 1953, pp.81-5.

9. The Independent (later Congregational) Church was formed in Baldock, 19th May, 1826. Church records list John Farr becoming a member in 1831 and Samuel Farr on 5th April, 1849, with an undated marginal note '...gone to Australia.' [sic]. Information supplied by John Rider, Baldock.

10. Pevsner, pp.165-70.

11. S.C. Farr, 'Account of Journey to England for Salmon Ova'. Farr family notes.

only speculate about other Hertfordshire and neighbouring county buildings he may have known and remembered, but examples of work done by Street and Pugin before 1849 are to be found nearby.

Hertfordshire's unusually ample supply of trees allowed the timber framing tradition to survive longer here than was possible in many other counties, so that Farr would have gained practical experience in a technique of special value for New Zealand conditions. Opportunities for working with stone were rare in Hertfordshire but he would have seen excellent examples of brick work, the favoured local material.

For many of the overcrowded, poorly paid population of England in the 1840s the prospect of a better future in a newly developing colony had great appeal. To a young man the sense of adventure involved in such an endeavour must have added to its attraction. Perhaps for Samuel Farr, there seemed little chance of success in the well supplied profession he had chosen, particularly as he had been in poor health for some years.

The immediate cause of his decision to emigrate was his engagement to Miss Mary Ann Pavitt who was on the point of leaving for Auckland with her family. John Pavitt of Hill Farm, near Epping in Essex, had nine sons and three daughters. The repeal of the corn laws and the low price of wheat made their living impossible and he decided to leave the eldest son in the family home while the rest of them tried for a better future in New Zealand.<sup>12</sup> Within a month of meeting Mary Ann, Farr had decided to journey with them across the world. His doctor had advised that a change

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12. For general background information about the Pavitt family see G.R. MacDonald, 'Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies', Card Index, Canterbury Museum, 1960.

in climate would benefit his health, and prospects for a young architect in Auckland were promising. Reminiscing in 1916 about his attitude to beginning a new life in New Zealand he said, '... I had made up my mind never to say 'no' to any job that I might be asked to do.'<sup>13</sup>

The intervention of fate brought Farr and the Pavitt family not to Auckland but to Akaroa, which proved a haven to the weary Monarch passengers after their perilous 134 day voyage. They were cordially welcomed by the group of French immigrants who had established the settlement at the head of Akaroa harbour under the auspices of the Nanto-Bordelaise Company in 1840, and also by the English, Scottish, Irish and German settlers in the district.<sup>14</sup>

The new country enthralled them and they climbed the hills behind Akaroa for a wider view. 'We were charmed with all we saw: the vegetation in its primeval beauty; mighty giants of the forest overshadowing dainty ferns and delicate mosses; the musical waterfalls in the valleys leaping from rock to rock; rippling streamlets winding in sweet cadence amid the forest trees entering shaded pools, or coursing through stable rocks and over rounded boulders on their journey to the sea. .... The notes and songs of the native birds, all new, filled us with a sense of enchantment and at the end of our ramblings we came to the conclusion that the country and its scenery in all its aspects could rarely be excelled.'<sup>15</sup>

13. S.C. Farr, 'The Story of Samuel Charles Farr', 1916.

14. New Zealand Statistics 1840-52. Table 1 lists Akaroa's population as 433 in 1849, 285 in 1850, and 441 in 1851. Because many of the people were engaged in occupations like whaling, the population figures fluctuate.

15. S.C. Farr, 'Peninsula and Plain', p.40.

Mr William Deans of Riccarton came to Akaroa seeking farm labourers among the Monarch's passengers but found they were, 'drapers, hosiers and a lot of gentlemen's and clergymen's sons'.<sup>16</sup> Deans and Mr Ebenezer Hay of Pigeon Bay outlined their optimistic views of Canterbury's future and described the preparation taking place for the arrival of the first immigrants expected before Christmas. News was received that Mr Godley, the Canterbury Association's representative had arrived in Wellington aboard the Lady Nugent (after visiting Lyttelton April 11th-13th) and advice came from all quarters that Canterbury's prospects were brighter than Auckland's.

'Having been proffered a fifty acre section in Robinson's Bay, I felt strongly inclined to settle in Akaroa but it lay with others to make the final decision.'<sup>17</sup>

That final decision was taken by forty one of the Monarch's passengers, including Farr and the Pavitt family, who now faced all the rigours of early colonial life. Farr, who wrote that when helping repair the Monarch's rudder, '...for the first time in my life I had a real experience of hard work',<sup>18</sup> had to acquire the self-sufficient skills of the pioneer, a task to which he was particularly suited. The wisdom of his doctor's advice is evident in the fact that Farr now showed no signs of any weakness in his physical health and stamina as he enthusiastically explored the Banks Peninsula area.

More impressive though are the tales of his ingenuity in tackling the many problems which confronted him. He contrived furnishings for the

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- 16. S.C. Farr, 'An Old Pioneer's Reminiscences', Lyttelton Times 17th Feb. 1906, p.10.
  - 17. S.C. Farr, 'Peninsula and Plain', p.42.
  - 18. Ibid., p.37.

small cottage he hired and soon felt it was sufficiently comfortable for a bride to share. He overcame the difficulty of having no ring for his wedding on June 15th, 1850 by fashioning one from a half sovereign.<sup>19</sup> True to his resolve to attempt any job asked of him, Farr repaired a clock and picked a lock to assist grateful locals. For Mr Hay of Pigeon Bay he successfully constructed a winnowing machine although he had no knowledge of such an implement except through a sketch in one of his books.

Mr Haylock and his sons, fellow passengers from the Monarch, had constructed a building and machinery for a water-driven flour mill in the Grehan Valley but were prevented from operating it because of problems with the gearing of the cog wheels. After the first and several replacement wheels had been crushed, Mr Haylock sent one of his sons to England to procure an iron wheel. Meanwhile, Farr, who had been asked to look at the machinery, discovered the inaccuracies in the setting of the spur wheel and was able to construct parts which allowed the successful functioning of the first English flourmill driven by water power in Canterbury.<sup>20</sup> Such an achievement required more than ordinary practical skills and understanding of the principles involved.

Despite Farr's accounts of his early years in Akaroa an accurate outline and chronology of his activities is difficult to obtain. In December 1850 he was in Lyttelton to witness the arrival of the first four ships and told Johannes Andersen that he was on the beach to shake the hand of J.E. Fitzgerald when he leaped ashore on 16th December.<sup>21</sup>

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19. This was the first wedding registered in Canterbury. On the occasion of the couple's golden wedding celebrations the event is recalled, 'First Wedding in Canterbury', Canterbury Times 20th June 1900, pp.34-5.

20. S.C. Farr, 'Peninsula and Plain', p.54.

21. J. Andersen, Old Christchurch in Picture and Story, Christchurch, 1949 p.53.

Evidently he also spent some time in Christchurch at this period because he describes how he observed the erection of Christchurch's first public building, the Land Office in Oxford Terrace, still incomplete when settlers were allotted their first sections on 17th and 18th February, 1851.<sup>22</sup> In 1906,<sup>23</sup> he recalled the various rough tracks through the tall flax, tutu and tangled grasses of what is now central Christchurch and says he was offered a section at the corner of Oxford Terrace for £5 but considered it worth no more than 5/- because of the twenty feet high sand bank on it.

It seems likely that he had visited Christchurch to assess the possibility of moving there but decided that opportunities in Akaroa were better and life there was considerably more pleasant. The Akaroa correspondent for the Lyttelton Times in 1854 agreed and wrote of the advantages Akaroa held over Christchurch as a place for settlement because of its sheltered accessible harbour, its rich resources of timber and its wonderful climate.<sup>24</sup>

Within a few weeks of their arrival at Akaroa the Monarch passengers had arranged to hold regular Sabbath services in their homes and Farr began Canterbury's first Sunday School in June 1850. When the English community decided in October, 1851 to erect a church it was Farr who drew up the plans. Built from locally provided materials, it must have been a simple structure designed for economy and convenience. It was completed on 10th October 1852, 'the first bona fide church open for Divine Worship in the Canterbury Settlement.' Fifty pound was provided by the Canterbury Association towards its total cost of £117.14.7 and Farr was one of the many Akaroa settlers who donated £1.0.0.<sup>25</sup>

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22. S.C. Farr, Notes for a letter to L.T., 3rd August 1880, Farr family notes.

23. S.C. Farr, 'An Old Pioneer's Reminiscences'.

24. L.T., 15th November, 1854, p.6, 18th November, 1854, p.6.

25. L.T., 4th October, 1851, p.7 and 21st May, 1853, p.11.

Farr wrote that 'the first architectural job' he did at Akaroa was to put up three gables on Mr Bruce's hotel, but no date is given for this.<sup>26</sup> His alterations extended the size of the accommodation house which had been on the foreshore since 1842<sup>27</sup> and no doubt the work he did here and in the erection of the church, demonstrated his capabilities to his neighbours. However, it seems that Farr did not limit himself to the establishment of a building business. He joined the Pavitt brothers in a formal partnership to cut timber at Robinson's Bay with a water driven saw mill. He first worked out the principles of such an operation by constructing a model, but the completed mill had only been successfully working for a short time when it was destroyed by fire.

The Pavitt's land in Robinsons' Bay was purchased in October 1853.<sup>28</sup> The date of the fire is not known though,<sup>29</sup> nor how long Farr continued at this mill. He was also involved in the establishment of several other later mills on the Peninsula.<sup>30</sup>

On the 1853 Provincial Government Electoral Roll Farr's occupation is given as Builder, the only one listed in Akaroa and he continues thus through this decade, adding Carpenter and Joiner in 1857-8. Other builders and carpenters appear among the occupations given on rolls after 1853 and

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26. L.T. , 17th Feb. 1906, p.10.

27. Gwenda Turner, Akaroa, Banks Peninsula, New Zealand, Dunedin 1971, pp.47-50 describes and illustrates the history of the Bruce Hotel at Akaroa. A photo is included of an advertisement from the Southern Provinces Almanac, 1872, which shows the hotel as altered by Farr, with three second-storey rooms each lit by six paned windows in large gables.

28. Land Office Records, 1D151. 27th October, 1853 Frederick, Henry, Alfred and Francis Pavitt purchased 100 acres from C.B. Robinson for £400. £200 was paid and the balance was to be paid within 18 months, with no interest charged.

29. L.T., 1st November 1856, p.3. reports a fire which destroyed the residence of Messrs Pavitt at Robinson's Bay, with no mention of damage to the mill, so presumably the family suffered two disastrous fires to hinder their progress within the first decade of their settlement.

30. The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand, Christchurch, V.3. Canterbury, p.361.

though there were probably several competent tradesmen in the area, it is most likely that a man of Farr's background and demonstrated abilities would be involved in any important building activity at this time.

When the Provincial Government agreed to finance the building of a jetty at Akaroa it was Farr who received the contract for what was much more the task of an engineer than an architect or builder. He advertised for 'three or four good carpenters and joiners', in the Lyttelton Times 29th September 1858, about the time the jetty was begun. Progress was reported in March 1859 when the first stage was complete. The jetty was, 'perhaps rather narrow for cart traffic but the workmanship reflects great credit on the contractor, Mr Farr who is also to be praised for the expedition which he has used for construction'.<sup>31</sup> At this date £415 had been spent and another £400 had been appropriated to provide stairs, a crane and a T shaped end for the jetty, so this project kept Farr and his men well occupied at least till the end of 1859.

With no further evidence available, it is open to conjecture what other building Farr may have done in Akaroa in the 1850s. The stone homestead at Purau, 1853 is credited to Farr by J.A. Hendry and J. Stacpoole<sup>32</sup> but the original plans held at the Canterbury Museum are signed C.E. Fooks and nothing has been found to link Farr to this building.

In August 1857, before his contract for the jetty, he had advertised for, 'three or four good carpenters and joiners with a prospect of constant employment'.<sup>33</sup> About this time he built himself a substantial timber home

31. L.T., 15th August 1857, p.1.

32. Mair, A.J. and Hendry, J.A. More Homes of the Pioneers and Other Buildings, Christchurch, 1974, No.31. J. Stacpoole, Colonial Architecture in New Zealand, Wellington, 1976, p.162, illustrated p.50.

33. L.T., 15th August 1857, p.1.



on a large section purchased from Reverend Aylmer at the south end of Rue Jolie, an indication perhaps of the security Farr felt with the 'prospect of constant employment', and not necessarily a reason for increasing his employees.<sup>34</sup> The house has not survived, as its fine site provided an ideal position for motel development about twenty years ago. Existing photos provide only a hazy idea of the house's original appearance prior to additions and alterations, but it seems to have been a single-storeyed hiproofed design with a bullnosed front verandah onto which French windows opened. In plan it was probably very similar to that of Reverend Aylmer's house, which may also have been Farr's work.

Akaroa's first Anglican vicar built his house on a section he had purchased from the Canterbury Association prior to his arrival in September 1851. Having begun his house and spent time and money on clearing the land, he found that his title was unclear, and in a letter dated 18th November 1852 to the Wellington Spectator discussing his problems he wrote, 'My house, a large and expensive one, is more than half finished and the materials of every kind for its full completion are prepared and on the spot.'<sup>35</sup> Because of Farr's active involvement in the work of the church, including the erection of its place of worship, Aylmer had been associated with him since his arrival in Akaroa. It is thus highly probable that it was Farr who was chosen to build his 'large and expensive' home. Described by Alexander Bowman as an, 'excellent example of what is considered the typical colonial residence',<sup>36</sup> Aylmer's house differs from

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34. Land Office records. Book C216, 3D/725 shows that Farr purchased section 216 Akaroa, 1st September 1852 from Rev. Aylmer for £40.0.0. The area was 1 acre, 1 rood and 10 perches. A mortgage transaction when £150 was raised on 27th January 1858, refers to the 'dwelling house and all other improvements' now on the section.

35. L.T., 29th January 1853 outlines and quotes from the correspondence Rev. Aylmer had entered into, endeavouring to sort out the difficulties over his title.

36. A. Bowman, 'A Study of the Historical Development of Domestic Architecture in Canterbury, New Zealand,' R.I.B.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1941, p.38.

the later Farr residence in that the low verandah originally surrounding its rectangular plan was formed under an extension of the roof line.

Another Akaroa house of the 'fifties which Farr may have designed is equally as substantial as the Aylmer residence although originally it seems less typical. This is *Blythecliffe*, built in 1857 for A.E. White, the Akaroa member of the Provincial Government and merchant partner of J.T. Peacock.<sup>37</sup> Built on five acres of land in the Rue Balguerrie *Blythecliffe* is considered to have been the first large house in the area, suitably grand for a man of White's position. Two-storeyed, with six rooms dispersed symmetrically on each floor, the house can best be categorised as Regency in style, resembling some of the houses John Verge built in Sydney in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>38</sup> Surprisingly, its hipped roof was not acquired until the 1870s. Prior to this, the roof was flat and in early illustrations the house presents an appearance that was quite unusual in New Zealand colonial architecture.

Totara studs 6"x2" have manuka sticks threaded through them and an infill of clay to provide sound, well insulated walls.<sup>39</sup> The front exterior is clad with Baltic pine boards, brought to Akaroa as ballast and native timber is used elsewhere. Between the two floors a heavy sail cloth was laid to improve insulation. A particularly high degree of craftsmanship is evident in the finish of the panelled ground floor ceilings, and the

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37. R. Dobbie, Press 3rd March 1979, p.13. An article on *Blythecliffe* provides historical information and three photos showing the house in the 1860s, 1870s and in 1979.
38. J.M. Freeland, Architecture in Australia, Harmondsworth, England, 1968, pp.75-83. Verge was responsible for the design of the Treaty House at Waitangi.
39. This was a building method often used by New Zealand's colonists. The techniques employed in early buildings in Canterbury, where use is made of available materials, are well described by A. Bowman, and P. Pascoe, 'A Study of the Early Buildings in the Canterbury Settlement of New Zealand', R.I.B.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1933.

entrance hall impresses with its spacious proportions. The graciousness of the house is enhanced by the elegant tapering of the square verandah supports, showing the entasis of Greek architectural forms.

This extremely well built house, which remains sound and attractive in its uncrowded tree-framed setting, shows qualities of design combined with practical colonial use of materials that suggest the hand of someone like Farr. Begun some time in 1857 it would have required the 'three or four good carpenters and joiners' for whom he advertised. Later in Christchurch, Farr was to become regularly involved with J.T. Peacock, White's business partner and was probably already acquainted with him in Akaroa, perhaps meeting White through him. Another connection with White occurred in 1861 when Farr raised a mortgage of £150 to purchase a small section and build a cottage on Rue Jolie,<sup>40</sup> a transaction likely to take place between two men of close acquaintance in Akaroa's early days.

The small, homely cottage Farr raised £150 to build on Rue Jolie in 1861 was probably provided for an employee. Gwenda Turner sketched it not long before it was demolished to make way for a modern home.<sup>41</sup>

It is difficult to know whether Farr achieved financial security during his first twelve years in New Zealand. In November 1859 he raised £300 with the security of his own house in Jolie Street,<sup>42</sup> possibly to invest in some of the activities of the Pavitt brothers who had now

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40. Land Office Records, Section 127 Book D, 11D/207,208. On 19th October, 1861 Farr purchased a 19 perch section from Wm Weston Esq. for £60. 11D/209, a mortgage of £150.0.0 raised from A.E. White, Akaroa.

41. G. Turner, p.53, bottom left.

42. Land Office Records, Book C216, 11D/145. 15th November, 1859 Farr raised a mortgage of £459.12.0 at 15% interest from Wm Weston Esq. to repay the £150 mortgage of 27th Jan. 1858 and interest, leaving £300. Mention is made here of the 'workshop and other buildings' beside the house on the land.

successfully branched into shipbuilding as well as farming and saw-milling.<sup>43</sup> There was a good deal of building work to be shared among the men associated with this trade in Akaroa. In 1858-9 the electoral roll for Akaroa lists three carpenters and one other builder, George Vogan, but there could well have been others who were not eligible to be on the roll. Farr's advertising for employees suggests he played the major role on the Akaroa building scene.<sup>44</sup>

In 1859 Farr assisted the group of Akaroa residents who joined to promote the interests of the Church of Scotland and was made treasurer of their building committee. In August of that year the contract for the Presbyterian church was let to Mr Etevenaux perhaps because Farr was fully committed in the building of the jetty, or other work, at that time.<sup>45</sup> When the new church was opened by Reverend Fraser in January 1860 the little Anglican church Farr had built in 1852 seemed inadequate and it was not long before plans were made to replace it. Controversy arose over the choice of site and the Lyttelton Times letter columns in April and May, 1861, recorded the confusion and differences of opinion over this. Farr was opposed to the final choice and wrote somewhat bitterly of his disapproval. The unfortunate ill-feeling that was generated probably only lasted briefly but it may have been enough to turn Farr's mind to consider the possibility of a move to Christchurch.

His years in Akaroa had been fruitful and happy. He and his wife had many friends as well as their family ties within the district. Their

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43. Frederick, Francis and Alfred Pavitt also raised a £300 mortgage in January 1860. Land Office Records 7D/124.

44. The only other advertisements noted for building workmen besides Farr's was 10th August 1859 Lyttelton Times when J.B. Etevenaux advertised for two good carpenters and joiners and on 31st September for a bench hand.

45. L.T., 5th February 1859, p.6. and 10th August, 1859, p.4.

daughter Annie was born in 1852 and then Everard completed the family in 1859. Farr enjoyed a wide range of interests apart from his profession and his church involvements. He was responsible for the propagation and distribution of some of Canterbury's earliest blue gum trees, carefully raised from seeds given him by the captain of an Australian trading ship.<sup>46</sup> Oil painting was a hobby he practised throughout his long life. The Akaroa Museum has several of his works including a view of Akaroa harbour dated 1850. In 1856 the Lyttelton Times<sup>47</sup> warmly acclaimed the merits of his 'panoramic view of Akaroa Town and Harbour' exhibited at Lyttelton and Christchurch, which showed 'exquisite accuracy of the delineation and colouring'.

Farr undoubtedly had a great love for the Banks Peninsula area to which he had so fortuitously come, but by 1862 it would have been obvious that a career as an architect, potentially more stimulating and financially rewarding than one as a builder, could best be pursued in Christchurch. Census returns for the end of 1858 showed that Christchurch's population of 1,443 exceeded that of Lyttelton which still had been the largest Canterbury town in 1856. Akaroa, with a population of 885 in 1858, could not provide the opportunities for advancement which were increasingly available in Christchurch.<sup>48</sup>

Christchurch, in the early 'sixties, was just beginning its metamorphosis from the rather rough collection of timber buildings scattered among tangled native vegetation, to the ordered appearance of a planned town where less makeshift buildings rose among thriving introduced

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46. MacDonald, 'Biographies.'

47. L.T., 12th July 1856.

48. L.T., 11th June 1857, census returns for January 1856, and 7th May 1859 for December, 1858.

trees.<sup>49</sup> A study of nineteenth century domestic architecture in New Zealand shows that there were generally three stages of development, from the first urgently erected temporary shelter to a modest but more permanent dwelling, and then later, when time and finance allowed, to a substantial, carefully planned home appropriate to the life style and status of the settler. A similar country wide progression can be seen in non-domestic building and Christchurch was no exception to this pattern. In June, 1862 the Lyttelton Times declared,

'Rows of elegant shops are beginning to grace our thoroughfares. ... Considering the age of Christchurch it can boast of commercial and trading buildings quite equal to any seen elsewhere.'<sup>50</sup>

Though this description was intended for English readers and is probably coloured by local pride it indicates the recognition in Christchurch of the improvement taking place. From the 1860s the greater sense of stability, confidence and security settlers felt in their adopted land was expressed in buildings which reflect their conscious effort to remain faithful to English architectural styles and trends, while adapting to colonial conditions.

By 1862, Christchurch was only beginning to see the design capabilities of Benjamin Mountfort.<sup>51</sup> The wooden portion of the Government Buildings, designed in partnership with Isaac Luck 1858-60, was widely admired, its c.£15,000 cost considered worthwhile as there was 'something

49. English trees were widely planted, encouraging settlers' feelings of being 'at home' in New Zealand. Peter Beaven in 'South Island Architecture,' R.I.B.A. Journal Sept., 1967, p.375, points out that in Canterbury, English trees matured in just one third of the time required in England.

50. L.T., 14th June, 1862. Quarterly Review, 'Social and Domestic,' pp.4-5.

51. I. Lochhead, 'The Early Works of Benjamin Woolfield Mountfort 1850-1865'. M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1975.

to show for the money'.<sup>52</sup> This historicist translation of Gothic forms into timber was an early example of Mountfort's skills which continued in both stone and timber building, providing nostalgic pioneers with visual links to their distant English past.

Other architects who had come to Christchurch in the 'fifties were Cridland, Mallinson and Fooks. Like Mountfort, who kept a stationery shop and engaged in portrait photography, they all found it prudent to have an alternative occupation. By 1861 the Southern Provinces Almanac listed six architects for Christchurch and building opportunities were obviously increasing.

Farr and his family moved to Christchurch in March 1862, perhaps because he had been offered a job in C.E. Fooks' office. Fooks had recommenced his profession as architect and surveyor in September, 1861 after financial difficulties forced him to leave farming. Only one tender notice appeared, (in the Lyttelton Times on March 22nd 1862) to suggest that he had much architectural work, but he may have needed assistance with surveying. He was commissioned by the Christchurch City Council in March to provide a ratepayers' roll and at the same time he began to prepare a map of the city which would, 'show the houses, fences and all improvements within the Town Belt at the present date': He must have been confident that his map would sell well at two guineas a copy and that, 'Bakers, Merchants, Professional Men, Storekeepers and others desirous of having their establishment distinctly notified in the reference on the map', would be happy to pay the required one guinea fee.<sup>53</sup> Farr may have been invited to assist Fooks in the project when he first

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52. L.T., 10th Oct. 1860, p.4.

53. L.T., 16th August, 1862, advertisement. An enlarged reproduction of Fooks' map of Christchurch is displayed at the Canterbury Museum.

came to Christchurch, or made the decision to move because of the chance to begin with Fooks. It seems improbable that he would have become the pupil for whom Fooks advertised on August 13th 1862, though he may have gained valuable practical experience in surveying under the younger man's guidance, as it is certain that he worked in Fooks' office some time between March and December, 1862.

The 1862 Southern Provinces Almanac's 'Trades and Callings Directory', lists as architects and surveyors A. Beetham, Hereford Street; R.J.S. Harman, Civil Engineer, Hereford Street; Mountfort and Luck, Gloucester Street; F. Strout, Hereford Street; W. Kitson, Hereford Street; C.E. Fooks, Lichfield Street and H.E. Blanchard, Cashel Street - an impressive list. However Farr must have believed he could expect a reasonable share of the work available to architects in Canterbury, and on December 3rd, the following advertisement was placed on the front page of the Press:

'S.C. Farr, Architect and Surveyor, Christchurch.  
Temporary office in Lichfield Street next to Oddfellows Hall.

S.C. Farr having left the office of Mr C.E. Fooks is prepared to undertake plans, specifications, estimates, surveys and the supervision of buildings, and trusts from his thorough knowledge of the profession to merit a share of public patronage.

December 2nd 1862'

Farr's first known commission in Christchurch, the Mechanics' Institute, was the result of success in a competition. Such competitions were to play an important role in his career. The practice of holding a competition to find a suitable design for a proposed building had gained favour among various community and church groups in Christchurch. Competitions for design were frequently held in Victorian England with the object of obtaining a choice of good plans for limited cost, so Christchurch



settlers, like those elsewhere in New Zealand, were continuing a system they knew and trusted. In 1853 a competition to find a suitable plan for Christchurch's first Town Hall was won by Cridland<sup>54</sup> but for varying reasons the scheme fell through and Mountfort designed the 1857 building. Requests for designs for a church in March 1859 led to a letter signed 'Architect' appearing in the Lyttelton Times on 19th March decrying the popularity of the system. It was considered unfair, with prizes usually insufficient to compensate for the winning architect's time while other entrants worked for nothing, and it was felt that the people usually involved in assessing the entries were far less competent to make judgments than the entrants.

Farr may have entered some competitions prior to leaving Akaroa and possibly prepared plans for a new Town Hall in January 1862 when prizes of £5 were offered to the first three place winners. Messrs. Mallinson and Company won on this occasion but again the proposed Hall was not built. The Provincial Government announced in March a much grander competition for designs for the Christchurch Lunatic Asylum with a premium of £35 for the winning entry (and the proviso that no design by the Provincial Architect would be placed). By May the premium had been increased to £100 and the competition was advertised New Zealand wide to attract entries from the best talent throughout the country.

A lengthy article in The Press 19th April, 1862, p.2, now expanded on the points of criticism made by the anonymous 'Architect' who had

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54. L.T., 10th Sept., 29th October, and 5th Nov., 1853.

written to the Lyttelton Times.<sup>55</sup> The competition system was declared unjust and not in the city's best interests. It was advocated that the public should trust the architect of their choice to provide buildings which would enhance the city. The trained architect was described as an artist who, 'educates and refines the popular taste, and the popular taste so elevated becomes better able to appreciate lofty designs and less satisfied with mean ones'. It was considered folly to have 'ignorant, uneducated' men judging work by these 'artists' and if Christchurch was to have worthy architecture its citizens should understand that, 'competition has not produced the greatest works of art in the world'.

The article made little impression on the Christchurch people to whom competitions remained the favoured means of obtaining designs for community and public buildings, but its suggestion that really good architecture could be provided only by architects, not builders or carpenters, came at an auspicious time for Farr. In the next few years there was a great increase in building and many people chose to employ architects, often for a simple shop or office which even today might not be considered to warrant the additional expense of the architect's fees, usually 5% of the total cost. Whether or not the Press articles championing of the architect encouraged this it is impossible to assess but the publicity would have done no harm to architects in Christchurch at this time.

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55. Fitzgerald, an amateur architect and friend of Mountfort's was editor of the Press, and probably was the author of the article. The author of the letter could well have been Mountfort in view of the similarity of the points raised in a letter he wrote on the subject to Rev. Habens who asked advice about competition. (The letter, dated Nov. 5th 1872 is among archives of the Trinity Congregational Church held by St. Paul's Presbyterian Church with which it has now merged.)

On December 13th 1862, the Mechanics' Institute's committee of management advertised their request for competitive designs for a building to be erected on their recently acquired site by the Avon in Hereford Street, £20 to be the prize for the winning entry and £10 for second place. Farr's design for an unpretentious two-storeyed timber building won the competition and work began in January 1863 on what was to be Christchurch's first (14) library. The building which was planned for maximum convenience, presented a quiet, dignified air of refinement appropriate for its purpose. All this was achieved economically which made Farr's design the committee's choice.<sup>56</sup> Benefits, apart from his prize, were the favourable public attention and opportunities to meet some of the city's most influential men. From the time of this first commission an interesting series of connections can be seen in the names which appear and reappear in relation to his work and other activities.

The notices inviting tenders<sup>57</sup> which Farr inserted in The Press and The Lyttelton Times sometimes provided little information to identify the buildings. For his first known work after beginning the Mechanics' Institute he simply said, 'Tenders are invited for the erection of a Dwelling House near Lake Ellesmere ...'<sup>58</sup> about which it is almost impossible to make positive conclusions. In contrast, the next tender on June 20th, 1863 was for, '.. a Dwelling House for J.D. Macpherson Esq.

56. The Press, 8th September, 1863, p.3.

57. Requests for tenders placed in newspapers are often the only surviving record of an architect's work. They are not totally reliable as buildings did not always go ahead as proposed if costs proved too high or other difficulties arose. Also, established architects often came to favour a specific group of builders who were approached individually for estimates of costs and this could mean the architect did much more than appears in the newspapers. Nevertheless the perusal of tender notices advertised gives a good indication of work done during Christchurch's early decades when public requests for tenders seemed to be the norm. They have been invaluable in building up a list of Farr's work.

58. The Press, 11th March, 1863.

near the Fendall Town Road about five miles from Christchurch.'

The house for J. Drummond Macpherson, a businessman of high esteem since his arrival in Canterbury in 1859, must have been a worthwhile commission for Farr, helping him to establish a reputation in Christchurch as an architect for men of standing. Named *Hawthordon*, it was a large house modelled on the family seat of the Drummonds near Edinburgh.<sup>59</sup>

Even more important was his commission to build a house in Papanui for J.T. Peacock,<sup>60</sup> now semi-retired from his successful merchant shipping business and currently a member of the Provincial Council. Peacock's

(1) house, called *Hawkesbury* after his father's home in Sydney, remained one of the grander residences in Christchurch well into this century when it was demolished and its extensive landscaped grounds were subdivided for denser housing.

Another competition brought Farr success in 1863. The Wesleyans sought designs for a new church to be built in Durham Street<sup>61</sup> and chose one by the Melbourne firm of Crouch and Wilson who were awarded the £50 premium, while S.C. Farr won £25 in second place.<sup>62</sup> After communicating with the winning firm it was decided that Farr should make some modifications to the plan, carry out further estimates and supervise the erection of the church.<sup>63</sup> The foundation stone was laid on January 28th, 1864, an occasion well publicised and reported in the newspapers, and the first service was held, before the building was quite complete, at the end of that year on Christmas Day.

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59. MacDonald, 'Biographies.'

60. Ibid.

61. Competition arrangements and details of the building required were advertised in The Press 20th April, 1863, p.3.

62. The Press, 21st July, 1863, p.3.

63. W.T. Blight, A House Not Made With Hands, Christchurch, 1964.

It was a creditable effort for Farr to gain second place in this competition which attracted entries from far afield, and the task of supervising the building of what was the first permanent material church in Canterbury, gave him beneficial experience. This was the largest building he had erected to date and probably his first usage of stone, certainly of this particular bluish-grey rubble stone from Banks Peninsula, with lighter facings of free stone. It would have been his responsibility to sanction the type of stone chosen and this was not a simple task as the qualities of Canterbury's building stone had yet to be proved. In June 1863 in a lengthy letter published in The Press Farr had made practical, discerning comments about the building stone available in Canterbury.<sup>64</sup> Today, the exterior of the Durham Street Methodist Church appears much as it did in 1864, testifying to his wisdom and skills. Although the little St. Peter's Church at Akaroa probably had some minor vestiges of Gothic appearance in timber detailing, the stone Methodist church was undoubtedly Farr's first major essay into the style, providing him with an opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with all aspects of it.

J.T. Peacock was just one of the 'coincidental' names which appears in the Methodist church minute books,<sup>65</sup> along with C.W. Turner, David Lewis, George Gould and F.J. Garrick. In the period between July and December, 1863 Farr had many dealings with these men while tenders were considered and negotiated and the plans were modified. For each of them he built a house and with most he had a long business association.

The Town Hall Committee had probably had insufficient funds to carry out their plans to build a new hall as designed by Messrs. Mallinson and

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64. The Press 13th June, 1863, p.2.

65. 'High Street Christchurch Trust Minutes 1862-1890', Methodist Church Archives, Hereford Street, Christchurch.

Company for the competition held in 1862. In August 1863 they decided they could go ahead with the building of a new Town Hall adjacent to the existing one in High Street and in November Farr's notice calling for tenders was published.<sup>66</sup> None of the items printed in the newspapers at this time suggest how Farr came to be given the task of designing the new building. Perhaps his work at the Mechanics' Institute impressed the committee and it was believed that he was the man who could design a hall (16) with the fine appearance and spacious qualities they desired, at a reasonable cost. However it came about, Farr received another prestigious commission and must have felt that his first year as an architect in Christchurch has been a great success.

1864 was a busy, prosperous year with at least six substantial gentlemen's residences under construction. Some of these, like *Hawkesbury*, would have been considered colonial equivalents of English mansions. For Mr E. Reece, the ironmonger, a nine roomed brick house was built on his 14 acre section in Windmill Road, Sydenham. No photograph of *Forres House*, as Reece called his home, has been found, but it is remembered as an imposing two-storeyed dwelling with balconies, over which creepers climbed.<sup>67</sup>

Similarly, gracious homes were built in Christchurch for J. Brown, (3) C.W. Turner and F.J. Garrick, and Farr's first known country commission was for a new homestead at Mt. Torlesse station. Stores in Cashel Street were erected for his client J.D. Macpherson, a suite of offices for Messrs Aikman and Wilson on the corner of Cashel and High Streets, and for

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66. W.J.A. Brittendon, A Dream Come True, The Christchurch Town Hall, Christchurch, 1972, p.11 and The Press, 5th Nov. 1863.

67. Tender, The Press 5th Jan. 1864, MacDonald, Biographies and information from Mrs Noel Wilson, great granddaughter of E. Reece.

J. Brown, a brewery and a malthouse on the South Town Belt. With the Town Hall and the Durham Street church requiring a good deal of his time, Farr must have been fully occupied in the first half of this year, especially as travelling time was becoming an important factor. Stamina from man and horse was required in making frequent trips over the hill to Lyttelton, which Farr needed to do in connection with further contracts. He was asked to design a stone church for the Presbyterians in Lyttelton and then for the Holy Trinity Anglican church he designed a two-storeyed stone

(4) parsonage.<sup>68</sup>

Considering the amount of work he had underway, it is not surprising that there were no tender notices signed by Farr in the newspapers for May, 1864. It is not known what office staff he had, though he had advertised in October 1863 for a pupil, 'One having a taste for drawing preferred'.<sup>69</sup> Further assistance was needed in mid-1864 and he took on a partner in June. Cornelius Cuff, who was the same age as Farr, had come to New Zealand in 1852. He had not studied architecture or surveying before he arrived here so he may have gained some experience in another architect's office before joining Farr.<sup>70</sup> Possibly he joined Farr totally untrained, to become Farr's 'pupil' between October and June. Initially he seemed to fill the role of business manager while Farr was responsible for designing and supervising. The impression gained from items in the diary of Edward Curry, manager of Mt. Torlesse while Farr built the homestead, is that Cuff maintained an office presence in the early phase of the partnership.<sup>71</sup>

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68. Tenders, The Press 17th March, 1864 and 19th March, 1864.

69. The Press 20th Oct. 1863, p.16.

70. MacDonald, 'Biographies'.

71. E. Curry, 'Diary, 1861-64.' Canterbury Museum Archives.

The first tender notice to be signed 'Farr and Cuff' was for a place of worship for the Congregationalists, in The Press on June 23rd 1864. However, it was solely Farr who was involved with the planning of this building. In December 1862 he prepared plans for the Congregationalists to build a church on their quarter acre section at the corner of Manchester and Worcester Streets. Problems of finance delayed building until 1864, when Reverend Habens arrived. He brought plans for a school-room with him, and Farr used this as a basis for the stone building he erected to serve as a church until the recently formed group could afford a more appropriate one.<sup>72</sup>

Towards the end of 1864 the firm of Farr and Cuff was responsible for the erection of two shops with rooms for storage and a residence on the second floor, for Mr C. Kiver in High Street. The building typifies the current progress in Christchurch street architecture as it replaced Mr Kiver's original cob structure with one of more architectural pretension, in a stone block 'of massive yet simple appearance'. The Lyttelton Times writer, describing the improvement this building brought to the Christchurch scene, was impressed by the fine effect achieved by framing the large, circle-headed plate glass windows in varnished cedar. He also mentions that, '... An iron verandah with glass top lights will be added prior to the completion of the structure'.<sup>73</sup> In The Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Farr is credited with designing and erecting this iron verandah, as the first such structure in New Zealand, another instance of his ingenuity and readiness to adapt to the use of available materials.<sup>74</sup>

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72. R.B. Keey, To Him Be The Glory. Christchurch, 1974.

73. Tender, The Press 17th Oct. 1874, 'Mr Kiver's New Store.' Lyttelton Times 13th April 1865, p.5.

74. The Cyclopedia, p.362. The information was supplied by Farr himself around 1900, and the question of his verandah being the first iron one is not verified elsewhere. However, even if he was inaccurate in his belief that his design was innovative New Zealand wide, it was still a fine achievement as he certainly designed it independently of knowledge of others here.



In January 1865, aged thirty seven and with two productive years behind him as an architect in the public eye, Farr stood for the Christchurch City Council and was elected, gaining the fifth of five available positions from among eight contenders by just two votes.<sup>75</sup> This involved him in weekly meetings each Monday evening (reported in The Press the following Wednesday) as well as work on committees, investigating, reporting and making recommendations for the city's improvements. He had further regular commitments from August 1865 as a Deacon of the Congregational church, and his involvement with the Sunday School here required more of his time, which to judge from his later reminiscences, he was particularly happy to give.

The bulk of the 1865 commissions for Farr and Cuff came in the second half of the year and only one of the tenders for dwelling houses mentions the client's name, 'Messrs Bruce and Coe near Lake Ellesmere'.<sup>76</sup> This partnership, which had organised coach transport between Christchurch and Lyttelton, had now embarked on a farming venture and John Coe required a suitable residence on their property at Irwell. The fact that Cuff was asked to design later additions to the house in 1877 suggests that he may have been more responsible than Farr for its design. It was originally a single-storeyed timber building with verandahs along the front continuing half way along each side.<sup>77</sup> However the uncomplicated floor plan with central front door and symmetrically placed rooms and the distinctive verandah supports relate to earlier and later designs by Farr. An example is *Rokeby*, Rakaia, of comparable size and design which featured similar verandah tracery. It could be that Farr played a greater part in planning this house but because of his many undertakings in Christchurch Cuff

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75. The Press 11th and 12th Jan. 1865, p.4.

76. Tender, The Press 9th Nov. 1865.

77. Mair and Hendry, Homes of the Pioneers, No.44. Brucecoe Lodge, Irwell.

acquired the major role in its supervision, thus having more contacts with the clients.

Business was fairly brisk for Farr and Cuff at the beginning of 1866 then it tailed off markedly as the year progressed. There was plenty of competition from architects of high calibre in Christchurch. Mountfort, who was now in partnership with Maxwell Bury from Nelson, had begun the new stone Council Chambers in November, 1865. Mason and Clayton, the eminent architects from Dunedin, were showing their capabilities with the commission to erect a Bank of New South Wales in Christchurch.<sup>78</sup> Robert Speechley who had come to the city to supervise the building of the Cathedral planned by G.G. Scott found time to educate the public with a series of lectures at the Mechanics' Institute.<sup>79</sup> His partnership with Crisp, announced in The Press on 25th July 1866, was followed by many requests for tenders related to the Anglican church as well as general commissions. St. Mary's Church, Merivale, the chapel at Christ's College, parsonages for St. John's and St Luke's Churches and a mansion for William 'Ready Money' Robinson at Cheviot Hills were among their works during the next two years. Leonard Terry of Melbourne was responsible for the classically designed Bank of New Zealand on the south-east corner of Cathedral Square,<sup>80</sup> a solid expression of status in the style still considered very appropriate for banks.

Although the 1866 Southern Provinces Almanac shows eleven architects or partnerships advertising for Christchurch, information from the

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78. Tender, The Press 27th October 1865.

79. The Press, 17th June 1865, p.2. Account of Speechley's talk on 'The Origin and Progress of the Different Styles of Architecture'.

80. Tender, L.T., 16th October 1866. J. Stacpoole, p.112 credits the design to Purchas and Swyer.

newspapers shows that Bury and Montfort, Speechley and Crisp and Farr and Cuff were the most active. However from the end of May 1866, no tenders for Farr and Cuff appeared, indicating that there was little work for them. They must have become rather anxious by early November when the City Council advertised for a City Surveyor. Cornelius Cuff was one of four applicants for whom members of the Council voted on 6th November. Cuff was appointed, with a salary of £280 per annum and on 14th November notice of the Farr and Cuff partnership's dissolution was advertised in The Press.

Farr had an immediate change in fortune as the result of a disastrous fire which destroyed a block of wooden buildings on the south-eastern corner of Armagh and Colombo Streets on the night of 5th November. On 9th November he was advertising that those who wished to tender for the erection of a hotel and shops on the site of the old Golden Fleece Hotel could see the plans and specifications at his temporary office, Melville Cottage, Durham Street, the Lichfield Street office having been given up when the partnership was dissolved. On January 4th 1867 tenders were, 'invited for the erection of a Presbyterian Kirk in Lichfield Street, Christchurch', with his office address now Cookham House Chambers in Colombo Street. He had prepared plans for a modest timber church and first presented them to the building committee of St. Paul's church on 7th November 1866. Although he was still in partnership with Cuff at this time, no mention of Cuff's name appears in the church's minute books and it is certain that the design was entirely Farr's work. When St. Paul's

(26) Presbyterian Church was completed in May 1867, The Press (on 24th May) reported that the building, 'although of no very great pretensions is fully suited to the needs of the congregation'. Designed to accommodate 350 people at a cost of about £850, it was considered praiseworthy that the congregation had achieved 'so commodious a building' at such a small cost.

1867 was a quieter year for Farr without his City Council commitments - his two year term ended in January. He had become President of the Sunday School Union at the end of 1866, and during March 1867 gave a series of readings to the general public at the Congregational Church on 'Sabbath Schools'. In May he entered a competition held by the City Council for an ornamental fountain. Five designs were submitted, with the one by Cuff chosen as most suitable. Farr's design, the Council believed, had considerable merit, being 'complete and substantial', whereas Mountfort's they thought 'more suited to a garden'.<sup>81</sup>

Competition had tightened for the fewer available architectural commissions in 1867 and only five tender notices were inserted in the newspapers by Farr for the year. The Press published an article on 29th October announcing Farr's decision to take over the management of a stationery and bookselling establishment.

'... It is almost a pity that Mr Farr has not thought it better to carry on his profession as an architect, but we believe the very great dullness which has pervaded amongst all classes of the community for a long time past has rendered the profession of an architect almost a sinecure without the usual counterbalance attached to sinecure offices of a large salary. Mr Farr has done much for Christchurch by introducing a compact, plain and suitable style of street architecture as instanced by such buildings as the offices of Messrs Wilson and Alport, Mr Petersen's shop, The White Hart, shops and billiard-room attached to the City hotel and numerous others. And amongst public buildings the Town Hall, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, the Independent Chapel, etc. He was also largely employed in designing and supervising the erection

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81. The Press, 18th June, 1867. Report of Christchurch City Council. Cuff's design is described in the Lyttelton Times 4th July, 1867, Supplement, p.1.

of private residences in the neighbourhood of Christchurch all of which are models of construction and replete with every requisite accommodation. One of the latest of these suburban buildings is that recently built for Mr George Gould. We trust Mr Farr will not altogether relinquish his profession and that when the time arrives for increasing the buildings within the city he may again give his time and talents for the benefit of his fellow citizens.'<sup>82</sup>

Farr did not 'altogether relinquish his profession'. Though his name was not included among the architects and surveyors advertising in the 1867 Southern Provinces Almanac it reappeared under these headings in 1868 as well as for his role as manager of the 'Fancy Repository'. Working here selling stationery, related items and tickets for functions at the Town Hall and supervising the lending library, he maintained contacts with the public. His connections through the Acclimatisation Society (which he joined in August 1867) brought him further useful association with influential members of Canterbury society.

Only one tender notice appeared under his name in 1868 newspapers, for an unspecified 'large building in the country'.<sup>83</sup> However, he also designed the two-storeyed block of shops and offices on the south-east corner of Colombo Street and Oxford Terrace, known as the Crystal Palace Building because of its large plate glass windows on the ground floor.<sup>84</sup> When the building was completed in October, 1868 he moved into one of the shops to manage a Music Depot and seems to have retained this position

82. The Independent Chapel referred to is the Congregational Church. Of the buildings mentioned as being designed by Farr no tender notices have been found for the office of Messrs Wilson and Alport, the White Hart Hotel, or Mr George Gould's house, an indication that the list of his known works is far from complete.

83. L.T., 4th August, 1868.

84. Canterbury Museum photograph, in collection of Colombo Street scenes shows the building almost complete. It has been signed S.C. Farr, Architect.

until sometime in 1870. In December 1869, another tender notice appeared giving his home address in Armagh Street West as the place where the plans and specifications of a proposed warehouse were to be seen. By July 1870, with business prospects looking brighter after several commissions including a shop for Messrs Beath and Company and a Masonic Hall, he once more advertised from an office address in Cashel Street.

Farr's interest in the work of the Acclimatisation Society deepened, and in 1870 he became the Society's secretary, a position he held for twenty years. The vast amount of time and enthusiasm he expended on behalf of the society is evidenced in the Minute and Letter books he left.<sup>85</sup> The manner in which he involved himself in Acclimatisation Society business reveals interesting insights into his character. Once he had formed an opinion on a subject he was unwilling to alter it and would stick dogmatically to his beliefs. He was fiercely protective of what he considered to be the Society's best interests, on one occasion coming to blows with a rival salmon breeder at the Lyttelton Wharf over possession of some ova newly arrived from Melbourne.<sup>86</sup> With unflagging energy he devoted himself to the task of acclimatising birds, bees and fish to Canterbury.<sup>87</sup> The only time he returned to his homeland was in 1884-85, to obtain salmon ova for several New Zealand Acclimatisation Societies and superintend their passage to New Zealand. He went to infinite trouble to overcome the difficulties involved in transferring his fragile charges from one hemisphere to the other, and despite limited success he remained firmly optimistic.

85. Acclimatisation Society records held at the Canterbury Public Library.

86. L.T., 5th, 6th, and 26th April 1876.

87. R.C. Lamb, Birds, Beasts and Fishes; The first hundred years of the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society, Christchurch, 1964. Records the history of the Acclimatisation Society and their achievements in which Farr's role is described.

During the return voyage from England with the ova Farr and a companion were accidentally locked in a freezing chamber for a brief period. However, it was long enough to cause a permanent disability to Farr's right arm. He endeavoured to persuade the New Zealand government to pay him some compensation and to reimburse him for the expenses involved in his journey, but his lack of success did not dampen his enthusiasm for the Society's work. High hopes were often followed by disappointments. R.C. Lamb, in Birds, Beasts and Fishes, quotes from a letter he wrote back to England describing the tender care he took of some newly arrived humble bees, which for a brief period showed signs of survival. Also quoted is the account Farr gave of the difficult journey he undertook with his son Everard and Sir John Cracroft Wilson to Lake Coleridge to release some newly hatched whitefish.<sup>88</sup>

Farr obviously found the Society's work absorbing and rewarding. He supported the Society's policy during the unpleasant controversy over the wisdom of introducing sparrows to New Zealand<sup>89</sup> even writing a poem in defence of the sparrow. In 1880 he wrote a small book about the Society's work promoting trout culture in New Zealand.<sup>90</sup>

For his work as secretary, Farr received an honorarium which must have been only a minor repayment for the time given. By the late 1870s he was frequently spending days journeying north or south to deliver young trout, and later visited Dunedin, Wellington and Masterton for the Society. However, in 1870 when he first became the Society's secretary he was endeavouring to establish a secure architectural practice and did not have

88. Ibid, pp.79-80, 30-31.

89. L.T., February, March 1880. "The Sparrow to the Farmer", Farr family papers.

90. S.C. Farr, A Brief History of Trout Culture and Distribution by the Canterbury Acclimatisation Society, Christchurch, 1880.

the need or confidence to devote too much time away from his professional duties.

A severe blow was dealt to his confidence in September 1870 when rumours were spread about the safety of the Town Hall after a series of earthquakes. On 5th June 1869, a fairly major earthquake had caused comprehensive property damage including a fracture in the facade of the Town Hall. No doubts about the safety of the building were expressed at the time and the Hall continued to be filled by large crowds without anxiety. A further quake on 31st August 1870 focused attention on the condition of the Hall and two reports on its safety which were prepared and published in the Lyttelton Times, 12th September, only served to confuse the public by reaching opposite conclusions. In their report, Richardson and Lean supported the spreading rumours that the Hall had been built with inadequate foundations and the cracks which had appeared made the building quite unsafe. Bray and Wright believed the foundations exceeded the standards required by the London Metropolitan Building Ordinance and that the cracks did not severely endanger the building. They recommended strengthening by the insertion of iron tie rods. To a meeting on the Town Hall shareholders on 24th October Farr presented three proposals and estimates for rebuilding, or strengthening and adding to the Town Hall. Nothing was decided, and the Town Hall was sold in March 1871, coming to an ignominious end in a fire two years later.<sup>91</sup>

Among a section of the community Farr's reputation as an architect must have been damaged by this episode, but the Town Hall committee was prepared to listen to his proposals and many others must have retained

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91. Brittendon, pp.12-14. L.T., 1st Sept. p.2; 2nd Sept. p.3; 5th Sept. letter; 6th Sept. letter from S.C. Farr; 7th Sept. Editorial; 9th Sept. p.2; 12th Sept. Reports and editorial; 25th Oct. Report of Town Hall shareholders' meeting, 1870.



their trust in his abilities. However, the building industry remained rather sluggish and he would have felt insecure in his reliance on public patronage. Two of the notable competing architects in Christchurch at this time were Frederick Strouts, recently become M.R.I.B.A., and W.B. Armson who announced his arrival on 21st November, 1870.<sup>92</sup> An opportunity to secure a regular income came Farr's way in December 1870, with the Lyttelton Borough Council's need for the services of a surveyor.

Following the great fire which had destroyed much of central Lyttelton on 23rd October, 1870 the Borough Council decided to upgrade their streets while having the sections in the burnt part of the town resurveyed. Applications for the position of Surveyor were received from W.B. Armson, C.W. Mountfort (the architect's brother) and C.E. Fooks as well as Farr, but because specifications prepared by him in 1868 for proposed culverts had impressed the council, he was selected.<sup>93</sup> With trains running regularly between Christchurch and Lyttelton through the connecting tunnel (opened since December 1867), Farr was able to commute conveniently in less than half an hour, engage in his duties on behalf of the Council and also be accessible for architectural clients in Christchurch.

Until his resignation from the position in July 1872 Farr made surveys of Lyttelton, supervised the formation of culverts, side channels and roading and was responsible for the maintenance of building standards. He took a great interest in the problem of finding a better water supply for Lyttelton and produced a scheme for the town's drainage. In 1912 Farr

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92. The Southern Provinces Almanac for 1870 lists only five architects and surveyors for Christchurch, Farr, Mountfort, Fooks, Huddleston and Lean.

93. Reports of the Lyttelton Borough Council Meetings. The Press, 16th Nov., 14th Dec. 1870 and 6th Jan. 1871.

described how he had made innovative use of concrete for side channelling at Lyttelton in 1871, and again later, while he was on the Christchurch City Council 1873-75.<sup>94</sup>

Meanwhile a variety of architectural commissions were carried out both in Lyttelton and Christchurch. For H.N. Nalder, solicitor to the Lyttelton Borough Council he built a house on the Sumner Road, the Canterbury Hotel destroyed in the Lyttelton fire was rebuilt on its original site and a large goods shed was erected for Talbot and McClatchie.<sup>95</sup> The Heathcote Valley and the Harewood local school committees chose Farr to design their school and school master's residences initiating Farr's involvement with this category of building.<sup>96</sup> Plans and specifications could be seen at 'Armagh Street East' though his residence was at Armagh Street West, while Lyttelton clients saw him at, 'my office in Lyttelton'. By October 1871, his office address was Cookham House Chambers, Colombo Street, which he retained for the remainder of his career.

The plentiful commissions which came in during 1872 account for Farr's decision to resign from his position as Lyttelton Surveyor in July.<sup>97</sup> Through this year he had twenty tenders for buildings published (27) in the newspapers, including the Anglican church at Leeston, the Red Lion (17) Hotel at Rangiora and a large block of shops for G. Gould in the Market Square. The Leeston connection brought further work in the district and in 1873 he received the task of designing a house at Southbridge for

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94. L.T., 25th May, 1912. 'Municipal History'. In an interview S.C. Farr recalled the city's past.

95. Tenders, The Press, 28th March, 20th May and 15th Sept., 25th Oct. 1871.

96. Tenders, The Press, 1st Aug, 27th Oct. 1871.

97. Canterbury Times, 20th July, 1872, p2. The Borough Council at Lyttelton accepted his resignation, giving him a unanimous vote of thanks.

- (6) C. Hurst Esq. The elegant two-storeyed timber villa he built has survived remarkably unaltered, as an example of his work from this period.

It was during 1872 that an association of architects was formed in Canterbury, with the aim of standardising fees and establishing a code of professional practice. The original members were Fooks, Lean, Strouts, Armson and Mountfort who was the first president. Qualification for membership was, 'any architect who has practiced in the province of Canterbury or elsewhere, for no fewer than three years, and who has duly served his time as an articled pupil to a properly qualified architect for a term of not fewer than four years'.<sup>98</sup> Farr never joined this association, perhaps because he had not served as an articled pupil the required four years. Perhaps he just did not feel inclined to join with his fellow architects in Christchurch. In 1863, when architects were supporting Mountfort's application to supervise the erection of the Cathedral, Farr's name was not among them, and there is no indication of his being associated with other architects in any activities to promote their profession's status.

When a competition held in 1874 for new library designs seemed to have been unfairly conducted, Farr wrote an indignant letter to the Lyttelton Times, making reference to the Institute of Architects. '... I may say I am not a member neither do I regret it, for if Associates cannot act honorably toward each other I fail to see what benefit accrues from such a Society and I am thankful that being a non-member has not prevented me from enjoying a fair share of patronage.'<sup>99</sup>

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98. N.Z.I.A. Journal, April, 1912.

99. L.T., 29th July, 1874, p.3.

Competitions again became an important element in Farr's career in (22,23) 1873. He won first place in competitions for designs for a Normal School, (24) a school for the West Christchurch Educational District and a stone church for St. Paul's Presbyterian congregation. These successes increased his prestige and consolidated his reputation. He now served a further term on the Christchurch City Council when he topped the poll in an election in September. (He resigned in March 1875 in protest at what he considered the unseemly rowdy conduct of some of his fellow councillors at meetings.)

Work began on the two competition-winning school designs before the end of 1873 but it was 1876 before the St. Paul's design was finalised and building began. He built other schools in East Christchurch and at Springston and received sundry commissions for alterations and additions connected with schools until the Board of Education appointed their own architect, Thomas Cane in 1876. For Presbyterian congregations he designed (28) churches at Kaiapoi, 1875; Papanui, 1877; Leeston, 1878, and the North Belt (Knox), in 1880, satisfying each group with buildings which provided the required accommodation conveniently, appropriately, and at a reasonable cost.

The Christchurch streets were being lined now by a greater proportion of shops and offices in permanent materials, with Farr's buildings being given generous praise in newspaper descriptions of 'City Improvements'. He received commissions for domestic buildings of diverse size and character (8,9,10, & 11) the most important of which was undoubtedly for G.H. Moore at Glenmark where he began with a Manager's house in 1875, erecting the ill-fated Mansion 1877-83 (see Chapter 2, pp63-9). This was his most costly and presumably his most lucrative commission<sup>100</sup> which must have required a

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100. The total cost of the Normal School was about £15,000 and this was the figure suggested as the total cost of Glenmark house just after it was destroyed by fire. There were also the extensive conservatories added to the house, the Manager's house, gate lodge, gardener's house, stables and other work Farr did here must have doubled the £15,000 figure.

great expenditure of time, energy and tact with a difficult client during the eight years he was engaged here.

Despite the unfortunate beginning to the decade with the questions raised over his construction of the Town Hall, Farr's practice through the 1870s was prosperous and esteemed. In the winter of 1880 his son Everard, now aged 21 years, became his partner after learning the profession in his father's office for some years. After a few trial tender notices appeared in the papers signed 'Farr and Son', they became 'S.C. Farr and Son' until September 1882, when the partnership was dissolved to allow Everard to take up a position as architect to the Board of Education. At this time Samuel Farr was a member of this Board but he was absent, probably deliberately, on the occasion when his son's application for the position was considered.<sup>101</sup>

The soundness of Everard's training is testified by the high regard in which the Education Board held him during his five year tenure of the position until a reduction in building work at the end of 1887 made him redundant.<sup>102</sup> He worked as an architect for a period in Melbourne before moving to Wellington, where he joined the firm of Clere and Richmond prior to joining the Public Works Department in 1894. With his long career in architecture, Everard continued the links to the building profession established by the Farr family in Baldock.<sup>103</sup>

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101. North Canterbury Education Board Minutes, 1881-85, Education File, Canterbury Museum archives.

102. A copy of the testimonial given Everard Farr when he left the Education Board is among the Farr family papers.

103. Graeme Farr, Samuel's great great grandson, is also maintaining the family tradition. He completed his architectural training at Auckland University in 1982.

Pleasure in his son's success was perhaps rather nullified by the disquiet Farr felt over his own future during the 'eighties. There was a marked reduction in the number of tenders he inserted in the newspapers 1882-88.<sup>104</sup> This does not necessarily mean he was involved in much less work because he may now have established a group of trusted builders from whom tenders were privately invited. Aged 57 years in 1885 Farr was still a comparatively young man seemingly not ready for retirement, though he may have had anxieties over his health with the semi-paralysis of his arm due to the mishap in the freezing chamber on the ship during his trip to England. However, he continued to list himself as a practising architect in Wise's Directory until 1908 and probably gained enough work to support himself and his wife.

That he faced serious financial difficulties through the 'eighties is evidenced by the Land Office records of transactions for his own home, built on the south east corner of Armagh and Barbadoes Street.<sup>105</sup> He had purchased the section at the end of 1874 for £200 and raised a mortgage of £400 early in 1876 to build his house which is shown on Strouts' map in 1877.<sup>106</sup> By 1885 he had a mortgage of £900 on the property for which he was unable to pay the required interest. He requested and was granted a reduction in the amount of the interest owing but defaulted his interest payments in 1887 so that the house had to be put up for public auction in October. The house was passed in to the mortgagee at £600 leaving Farr with a debt of £300 to contend with.<sup>107</sup> Having lost his home, Farr and his wife lived for some time in rooms associated with the

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104. A systematic search has not been conducted through newspapers past 1888, but a rapid look at tender notices has revealed nothing further.

105. Land Office Records, Book AS, p.992.

106. Frederick Strouts prepared a large detailed map showing buildings in the city in 1877, Canterbury Museum Archives.

107. L.T., 29th October, 1887, p.8.

Acclimatisation Society's offices before renting a house in Cashel Street. He is not known to have owned any other properties, so though he designed two homes for himself, he lived in them for only a small proportion of his life, less than five years at Akaroa and eleven years at Barbadoes Street. For many Christchurch men, like Gould, Peacock, and Garrick, he built gracious family homes in which they lived out their lives in comfort. For Farr himself this was not to be.

With a country-wide depression through the 'eighties there was some decline in building, and Farr faced a formidable rivalry from other architects practising in the city. Armson died in February 1883, his obituary describing him as having occupied, 'the first position of an architect in the colony'.<sup>108</sup> The names of Strouts, Mountfort, Cane, Lean, Maddison, Jacobsen and Lambert appeared regularly at the bottom of tender notices in the Christchurch newspapers and were joined by F.W. Petre, who received a number of large commercial commissions, and the young S.H. Seager. Seager represented the emerging number of well qualified young architects whose fresh and vigorous approach to design was soon to eclipse that of the older pioneer group. Farr had achieved two peaks in his career, first in the mid-sixties and again in the seventies. By the middle of the 'eighties, his role in the Christchurch architectural scene had become a minor one.

In 1886 Farr became South Island Secretary to the Children's Special Service Mission, an interdenominational scripture organisation, and later became Honorary Secretary for all the New Zealand branches. He travelled throughout the South Island organising meetings, and distributing magazines and cards. He continued as secretary in Christchurch

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108. The Press, 28th Feb., 1883, p.3.

zealously carrying out his responsibilities until 1914. He became well known to the Sunday School children in Christchurch by distributing scripture cards to them and his long white beard earned him the nick name, "Father Christmas".<sup>109</sup>

His activities as deacon and then elder at St. Paul's church kept him busy and a great deal of his time was spent in work for the Acclimatistion Society. In implementing the Society's programmes he continued as a timeless, dedicated labourer. At the annual meeting in 1877<sup>110</sup> it was reported that Farr had spent five days journeying into the Southern Alps with young fish to liberate in a small lake at the back of Mt. Torlesse about six miles from Craigieburn. In acknowledgement of his service to the Society, this lake which it was hoped would one day be a great attraction to fishermen, was named Loch Farr. His extensive knowledge was used in 1894 and 1895 when he wrote a series of informative articles for the New Zealand Country Journal about insect pests in New Zealand.<sup>111</sup> During the 1890s he began painting again with renewed enthusiasm and in 1900 he spent six months meticulously executing in timber a bas-relief of Banks Peninsula for the province's fiftieth Jubilee celebrations.<sup>112</sup>

From the interviews Farr gave to the newspapers in the early years of this century and his various reminiscences, no impression is gained that his architecture was the driving passion of his life. He was proud of his achievements in church work and for the Acclimatisation Society. The various inventive ways he had solved problems and coped with the

109. P. Lineham, No Ordinary Union, Wellington, 1980, pp.14-19.

110. L.T., 4th March, 1887, p.3.

111. S.C. Farr, 'Injurious Insects, The Farmer's Foes', New Zealand Country Journal, V.18-19, Christchurch 1894-1895, pp.125-130, 225-226, 423-428, 505-507; 81-83, 176-178.

112. The bas-relief is on display at the Akaroa Museum but the whereabouts of a gold medal awarded at the time for this exhibit, is unknown.



difficulties of pioneering days were also remembered with nostalgic pride. Practical and resourceful as a colonist, he approached architecture in a similarly pragmatic way. His eye for harmony and unity in design was sure and skilled and though he remained within contemporary stylistic guidelines as to what was appropriate for each category of building, he felt no compulsion to remain faithful to architectural rules. His work helped educate the public taste to appreciate a good standard of design in street and domestic architecture with buildings in which convenience and good taste always took precedence over excess ornament or pretentious detail.

In 1912, two years after the celebration of their Diamond Wedding, Mary Ann died, aged 86 years. Samuel Farr died on 14th July, 1918 aged 91. In 1877 when he wrote about the passengers from the Monarch who had settled in Akaroa in 1850 he had said,

'Some have done little to mark their course and when they pass away will be forgotten; but there are others who have left their mark upon the rock of time, not soon to be erased. Their aim has been usefulness; they have been in every sense of the word, good colonists.'<sup>113</sup>

Undoubtedly Farr fitted into the latter category.

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113. S.C. Farr, 'Arrival of the First English Ships', H.C. Jacobsen, Stories of Banks Peninsula, p.115.

## CHAPTER TWO

## DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

The predominant field of architecture in which Samuel Farr worked was domestic. Of approximately two hundred buildings he is known to have designed, half were houses. Many of these were for the elite in Christchurch society who required a residence which reflected their status but he also designed living accommodation combined with shops, schoolmasters' houses, parsonages and what he described in some tenders simply as 'cottages'.

Farr's earliest houses were stylistically simple but because architecture (as distinct from building) was equated with ornament in the Victorian mind, the later houses for men of substance were more lavishly adorned with architectural embellishments following fashionable taste. Architectural journals and pattern books were available to Farr and his clients for ideas about styling and planning.

Farr would almost certainly have possessed Gwilt's An Encyclopedia of Architecture, an invaluable guide for the nineteenth-century architect. Robert Kerr's The Gentleman's House may have been one of the books Farr consulted and he could also have had a copy of Calvert Vaux's Villas and Cottages.<sup>1</sup> His houses were designed to meet the requirements Kerr put forward - substantial, comfortable, convenient and 'fairly adorned', avoiding 'that poverty of dress which is not self denial but inhospitality',<sup>2</sup>

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1. J. Gwilt, An Encyclopedia of Architecture, Historical, Theoretical and Practical, London, 1842. R. Kerr; The Gentleman's House, London, 1871. C. Vaux, Villas and Cottages, A Series of Designs Prepared for Execution in the United States, New York, 1970 (first published 1857)
  2. Kerr, p.90.

and the 'patterns' provided by Vaux could have been the basis for some of his buildings. However, even Farr's grandest houses were less complex in plans than what Kerr advocated as necessary for a gentleman's residence. At the 1963 New Zealand Institute of Architects' Conference in Christchurch Bill Wilson observed that the Christchurch Cathedral was five-eighths full size. Colonial architecture generally can be seen to follow this tendency and New Zealand's 'mansions' suggest that they are scaled down versions of English models.

At first Farr's usual ground plans were a basic rectangle or square with verandahs. Later, for larger houses a projecting wing was added or two rectangular blocks were juxtaposed. The architectural styling of the house having been decided, perhaps at the client's suggestion, Farr would provide the house with a symmetrical or an irregular facade appropriately dressed with applied ornament. Most often his houses were variations of an Italianate or Gothic style, both of which Kerr recommended for their adaptability. Regardless of style, the houses were similarly planned with the central front door flanked by a drawing and dining room. When space and finance permitted, there would be separate regions for the gentlemen, ladies and children of the house. Servants, who were employed in the majority of the houses Farr designed, were sometimes provided with extensive quarters with their own stairway. In both large and small homes the reception rooms of a more public character were placed at the front, with family rooms and service areas behind them and the bedrooms upstairs.

Farr built prestigious 'gentlemen's residences' for J.D. McPherson, D. Lewis, J.T. Peacock (1863), E. Reece, C.W. Turner and F.J. Garrick (1864) and G. Gould (1866 or 7). Further important houses were built in the 1870s, including *Glenmark*, the most important domestic commission in his career. Because men like Moore, Gould or Garrick were prominent citizens it is

easier to gather information about their homes than for the smaller homes of less affluent men.

- (1) *Hawkesbury*, the two-storeyed timber home he began for J.T. Peacock towards the end of 1863, must have been one of the finest homes in Christchurch during the '60s.<sup>3</sup> Sited on a large property on the east of Papanui Road (where Mansfield Avenue has now been formed), the house faced north overlooking lawns, stream and attractively laid out grounds, where two garden parties were given each year for up to three hundred people. Four gardeners cared for the bowling green, archery ground, tennis court, swimming pool and three glass houses within this extensive garden which had been created as an appropriate setting for the gracious residence Farr designed. An Italianate air was given by the round-headed sash windows arranged singly or in pairs. The triple arch form of the front entrance was copied for the bay windows. A verandah featuring paired, geometric-patterned supports extended across the front of the house and part way along each side, its roof providing a wide balcony area accessible from the upper floor. The eaves of the hipped roof were elegantly decorated with brackets and the two gables, which broke the roof line on the north, west and probably eastern facades, were finished with delicate bargeboarding and a circular louvred ventilator. Rusticated boarding and quoins emphasising the corners of the building were in the colonial tradition of stone detailing translated into timber.

The character of *Hawkesbury*, as illustrated in photographs, was probably established in 1863 although there were some alterations and additions undertaken by Farr in 1874.<sup>4</sup> How extensive these alterations were

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3. E. Webb, 'History of the Webb-Peacock Family', unpublished record in the possession of Miss E. Webb, Christchurch.

4. Tender, The Press, 6th Jan. 1874.

is not known, but they included a detached, two-storeyed gazebo approached by an elevated walkway at balcony level. The overall exterior of the house resembles two of the models included in Vaux's pattern book, although the planning of the interior differs.<sup>5</sup>

From the large central entrance hall one entered the dining room (2) on the right and the drawing room to the left through folding doors which could be fully opened up to create a vast single space for entertaining. A billiard room, breakfast room and library were sited on the ground floor along with kitchen facilities, while the second floor contained eleven bedrooms to accommodate visiting family members and guests. At Christmas through the '60s and '70s Peacock's sisters, Mrs J.E. Brown from *Swannanoa* and Mrs H.R. Webb from Lyttelton, stayed at *Hawkesbury* with their families. J.E. Brown was an American, who named his run *Swannanoa* after his home district. From 1875, he and his family lived at nearby *Chippenham Lodge*, a house owned by Peacock which had been built by Mountfort in the '60s. When the Webb family moved to Christchurch from Lyttelton, they too had a house built by Farr, (see below p.70). A third sister, Mrs F.J. Garrick, visited from her nearby Papanui home, another house which Farr designed in 1864.<sup>6</sup>

For Garrick, a prominent early Christchurch solicitor, Farr built (3) *Orwell*, a two-storeyed timber 'villa residence' on a section which extended from Papanui Road along Church Lane. This house, like *Hawkesbury* was added to at a later date, presumably by Farr who advertised for tenders 'for additions and alterations to a house at Merivale for F.J. Garrick Esq.' in The Press, 7th Sept. 1872. By this time Garrick also owned another Merivale property on which *Amwell* was built, so the tender might have referred to

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5. Vaux, p.240 and p.312

6. Tender, The Press, 7th March, 1864.

either of these houses named by Garrick and Farr probably built them both.<sup>7</sup> Originally they were possibly simple rectangular-planned houses, featuring timber tracery in the twin supports of the verandahs, double-storeyed at *Orwell*, single-storeyed at *Amwell*, where the projecting bay window of the drawing room is contained within the verandah's width. Each house was enlarged by the addition of similar bays at the right side of the front entrance giving an asymmetrical appearance, more typical of the '70s than the early '60s. *Orwell* has been demolished but *Amwell* survives on reduced grounds at 166 Papanui Road, its air of quiet refinement still apparent.

In The Press account of Farr's decision to manage the Fancy Repository on 29th Oct. 1867, *Hambledon*, George Gould's house on Bealey Avenue is mentioned as one of his recent designs. Looking at it today it is very difficult to envisage the house as it was at that date, as there has been a great deal of change and addition.<sup>8</sup> Some of the two-storeyed section which faces north beside Springfield Road resembles Farr's later *Oakleigh* (see below p.59) with its large sash window panes, timber detailing and particularly the small perforated zinc ventilation panels inset under the eaves. Two-storeyed of timber with a shingle roof, the house was possibly similar to Garrick's two Merivale houses, though an early painting<sup>8a</sup> confuses the issue by showing a house which bears no resemblance to the existing building. The well built large brick stables with staff accommodation above, for which Farr advertised for tenders in 1872,<sup>9</sup> has survived largely unaltered having found a new use as garages.

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7. A.J. Mair and J.A. Hendry, Homes of the Pioneers, Christchurch, 1968, No.12 *Orwell*, No.14 *Amwell*.

8. G.L. Clarke, Bealey Avenue, Christchurch's North Town Belt, Its History and People, Christchurch, 1976, p.44. V. Gould, 'George Gould', Christchurch 1950-51, family history at New Zealand Room, Christchurch Public Library, pp.7-8.

9. Tender, The Press, 1st May, 1872.

8a. Gould, p.17.

The best surviving example of a house Farr designed in the '60s is 4 & 5) the Parsonage at Lyttelton.<sup>10</sup> Though not a residence of the same status as the ones he built for Christchurch businessmen, this house has a genteel dignity appropriate for its purpose as the home of the vicar for Lyttelton's Holy Trinity Anglican Church. It was stipulated by the Church Property Trustees, who made a grant for the Parsonage, that it be built of stone and after some negotiations and adjustments to the specifications a tender from the England Brothers for £1128 was accepted in July, 1864.<sup>11</sup>

Built high on a steeply-sloping section on Ripon Street some distance from the church,<sup>12</sup> the Parsonage has a slate roof and eighteen inch thick walls from random-cut blocks of dark sandstone, brought by punt from Quail Island in Lyttelton Harbour. Regularly cut blocks provide a string course, form the quoins and frame the windows. A Gothic appearance was given to the house by the three steep gables of the entrance porch, with the shape of its pointed door echoed in two of the upper storey windows.

The large living room is provided with magnificent views from the bay windows south and west over the harbour, receiving only a limited amount of sunlight through its north-west facing windows. Comparatively recent additions provide sunlit rooms at the rear where the kitchen, continuously heated by its coal range, originally had only one window facing south-east. In the 1860s there was no desire to provide a sunny kitchen where the housewife would swelter in summer, nor was it considered advisable to allow too much sunshine into the other rooms, where it could harm furnishings. Light and fresh air were planned for according to Victorian standards and houses were sited to present their reception rooms to the street regardless

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10. Tender, The Press, 19th March, 1864.

11. Vestry Minute Book 1860-67. Holy Trinity Church, Lyttelton.

12. The Parsonage was sold in 1870 when a new house was built on a site adjoining the church. The architect was Thomas Cane.

of whether this would allow sun penetration. Rooms which faced the sun and had no sheltering verandah, had blinds kept lowered so that they could remain shaded. Thus, the Lyttelton Parsonage was not carelessly sited or poorly planned, but reflects contemporary concepts of a house's requirements. A. Bowman, writing about Canterbury domestic architecture in 1941, criticises the orientation of the house. For someone like Bowman following current ideas where rooms were opened up for maximum sun and light, it was beyond belief that earlier architects could design houses without that aim.<sup>13</sup>

Although it is not a large house, its rooms are spacious and well proportioned. Over each of the bedroom doors is an adjustable panel to allow the control of extra ventilation into the rooms, the sort of ingenious detailing one comes to associate with Farr's designs. No space has been wasted and wardrobes or cupboards have been built into the irregular shapes formed by the roof line. The stairway, which rises from the broad entrance hall, turns in a dog-leg, allowing the insertion of a small cupboard below its upper flight. The string board facing the side of the stairs is ornamented by the addition of a thin panel of wood shaped at its lower edge to form a frieze-like pattern. A rather sombre exterior appearance was enlivened by the inclusion of serpentine barge boards and an abundance of dainty finials to produce a charming overall effect which has not diminished during its 118 years.

Also surviving in Lyttelton, though in poorer condition than the parsonage, is the timber home of Reverend Fergusson, *Dalcroy House*, which was probably built in Dampier Bay in 1865. Fergusson was associated with the Presbyterian church Farr built here in 1864, teaching at the school

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13. A. Bowman, "A Study of the Historical Development of Domestic Architecture in Canterbury, New Zealand." R.I.B.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1941, p.62.



established by the church. Farr is connected with *Dalcroy House*, advertising for tenders for it to be painted in 1871 and again in 1877, so there is every likelihood that he also designed it though no tender for its building has been found.<sup>14</sup> Features here like the balcony formed by the verandah's roof, the sash windows with arched tops and the bay windows are all seen in Farr's designs, making stylistic links further evidence for his involvement.<sup>15</sup>

Farr designed several houses in the country during the '60s, the Mt. Torlesse homestead in 1864, a house for F. Pitt Esq. *Rokeby* at Rakaia, begun at the end of that year, *Brucecoe Lodge* with Cuff at Irwell in 1865 and a house at Stockgrove, north of Amberley for C.R. McDonald Esq. in 1866. These four houses may have been similar, single-storeyed or with attic accommodation and lit by windows at the gable ends of the roof. Each had verandahs across the front and along at least part of the sides. *Rokeby*, in derelict condition now, had timber tracery in the twin verandah supports resembling that at *Orwell* and its ground floor plan compares to that of *Brucecoe Lodge*. Its roof had the central valley which frequently caused problems in nineteenth-century houses. Sleeping accommodation for servants was provided in the attics at the rear. The Stockgrove homestead, described by the present owners of the property who demolished it, was similar in plan and appearance.

The appearance of the Mt. Torlesse homestead is unclear. The 1863

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14. Tender for painting *Dalcroy House*, The Press, 8th Nov. 1871. Lyttelton Times, 12th Nov. 1877. Land Office Records 23 D307 show that Fergusson purchased section 272 on 31st Dec. 1864 for £180 and raised a mortgage of £500 on 18th May 1865. He purchased the adjoining section 274 on 23rd Oct. 1875 for £300.
15. F. Cresswell, Old Homes, Lyttelton Harbour, Christchurch, 1955, pp.31-33.

date on a photo taken by Dr Barker<sup>16</sup> is unlikely to be wrong, yet Mr Johnson, whose family has owned the property since 1904, has a copy of the photo dated 1866, and the house which is shown should be the one Farr built in 1864. In 1870, The Lyttelton Times reported that a fire, 'totally destroyed ... the well known and picturesque residence' on the station.<sup>17</sup> Despite this item, the homestead, which was demolished early in this century when the present building was erected, bears a close resemblance to the one depicted by Dr Barker in 1863 or 1866. (Mr Johnson possesses photos dated 1904 of the gable end of the house.) If Dr Barker's photo was of the Farr designed building after 1864 and if the fire did not "totally destroy" the homestead so that it was repaired to survive another thirty years, it was a long rectangular building enclosed by verandahs on three sides with bedrooms under the high pitched roof. This can be seen as a typical colonial homestead and perhaps as a development of the Reverend Aylmer's house.

Although Edward Curry, manager of Mt. Torlesse station, kept a diary<sup>18</sup> throughout the period when the homestead was built (March to July, 1864), he does not describe the new house. However, he does provide some interesting facts about the practical problems involved in building a station homestead. His main concern was to ensure the arrival of building materials and he spent several days through February 1864 exploring the nearby bush for suitable black pine to be cut and made arrangements for its felling and draying to the site. A trip was made to Christchurch on 1st March to finalise details of the specifications with Farr, who visited the station on the 18th March with Bailey the building contractor to inspect the site, the cut timber and the prepared shingles split from Bokaka trunks growing

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16. Photograph collection, Canterbury Museum Library.

17. L.T., 6th Dec. 1870, p.2. Town and Country, 'Mt. Torlesse Station'.

18. A typed copy of Curry's diary was kindly loaned by Mr. Johnson. The original is in the Canterbury Museum Archives.

in a local swamp.<sup>19</sup>

Curry made more trips to Christchurch over the next months than Farr did to Mt. Torlesse as he was often seeking replacement staff. The remote station had limited appeal for newly arrived immigrants, and he enlisted Mrs. Farr's aid in seeking suitable servants. By early April the piles were in place and a fortnight later the first timbers were raised on the site where the old cob homestead had been demolished. Meantime dray-loads of logs were arriving and being pitsawn nearby. At the end of April Curry spent a day with one of the plasterers at the river bed in search of suitable sand and later reported one of his men, "draying up sand for the plasterer".

Farr only visited the house twice more, in May and again in August when there was a problem over an unsatisfactory chimney in the completed house. Visiting Mt. Torlesse involved a full day's ride. Curry usually broke the journey by staying overnight at White's Accommodation House, Courtney, but Farr preferred to begin early in the morning so that he was only two days away from Christchurch. Curry's diary helps round out the picture of colonial life and travel in the '60s, allowing an appreciation of the time Farr spent journeying to see his clients. The establishment of rail links by the '70s cut his travelling time considerably, but he still must have spent long hours on horseback to pursue his profession when commissions began to build up again in 1871.

While working in Lyttelton for the Borough Council, Farr designed a house on the Sumner Road for the Council's solicitor H.N. Nalder. Nalder

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19. Information about the Bokaka trees provided by Mr Johnson. These trees of the Podocarp genus which are rare in Canterbury are very strong and suitable for shingles.

was able to persuade the Council to pay half the costs of an access road to his steep section overlooking the harbour.<sup>20</sup> His house remains today, still benefiting from the views for which it was planned by Farr. The house can be identified in early photos which present panoramic views of Lyttelton, a two-storeyed block at its western end flanked by a single-storeyed verandahed section.<sup>21</sup> Built of timber, the two-storeyed section has thick walls with an infill of clay, absent from the lower part of the house where it was perhaps not considered necessary as insulation and protection from the weather. Because of its modern 'split-level' appearance the house is not immediately recognisable as one over one hundred years old, but the early photos which show its outlines indicate that the changes since it was built are superficial and its plan must have been unusual for its time.

Much more conventional were the two residences for school masters which Farr designed in 1871 at Heathcote Valley in August and at Harewood Road in October.<sup>22</sup> The land for the school and master's residence in Harewood Road was given by Mr Stanley, an orchardist who owned several hundred acres of land extending from Harewood Road to Wairakei Road. After a no doubt satisfactory association with Farr during the building of the school, Stanley asked Farr to plan additions for his own house, probably about ten years old in 1872.<sup>23</sup> Mr Clarke, the present owner of the property, has two photos which show the house before and after the additions.

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20. Tender, The Press, 28th Mar. 1871. Report of Lyttelton Borough Council Meeting, The Press, 26th April, 1871.

21. A tender in Lyttelton Times, 8th Oct. 1888 by Collins and Harman is for additions to Nalder's house but a postcard dated 1882 at the Canterbury Museum shows the house, in the distance, in its present form.

22. Tenders The Press, 1st Aug. 1871, 7th Oct. 1871. The Heathcote Valley school and school-house Farr designed may not have been built. Education Board Minutes, Nov. 1871, refer to designs by Mountfort and the school's Centennial booklet, 1968, discusses the first school room built in 1880 after classes were held in a local house.

23. Tender, The Press, 4th Nov. 1872.

The original two-storeyed timber house had a central front door opening into a passage way with a room to either side. A narrow stair gave access to the three small rooms lit by windows in the gables under the shingled roof. The kitchen and associated rooms were accommodated at the rear under a lean-to roof. Farr built a verandah across the front of the house and added a two-storeyed wing at the western end. An enclosed stair led to the three bedrooms at this end of the house and these are also lit by somewhat large arched sash windows in the gables, decorated by fretted barge boards and finials. A ground floor window allows light to the hall and stair, and a bay window completes the north facade. Farr's practical bent is illustrated by his use of large stones gathered from the property as foundations for the additions. The shingle roof is now covered by corrugated iron and some internal alterations have been carried out to make this sound building a comfortable modern home while its nineteenth century character is retained.

The fashionable bay window projection which enlivened the main living room of Mr Stanley's house was featured by Farr in 1873 in the Wesleyan Parsonage he built at Springston.<sup>24</sup> This modest two-storeyed weatherboard house was built for £700 and decorative detail was restricted to the twin supports for the verandah which flanked the projecting bay and the simple finials which crowned the gables.

In July 1872, Farr was asked to prepare plans for a parsonage for the Anglican church at the corner of Harewood and Papanui Roads, and tenders were duly invited in a notice in The Press 5th Sept. 1872. The only illustration of the house is found in a booklet produced for the church's

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24. Tender, The Press, 19th Nov. 1873. Acceptance of Mr Rankin's tender, 31st Dec. 1873. Rev. Wm. Morley, The History of Methodism in New Zealand, Wellington, 1900, p.429, Illustration p.433.

seventy-fifth anniversary<sup>25</sup> and shows a simple two-storeyed timber structure with low-pitched hipped roof. It had single sash windows on the upper floor and a bay window at the side on the ground floor. There may have been a further bay with a central front door and flanking verandah at the front of the house but its overall style appears similar to *Oakleigh*, the homestead Farr designed for C. Hurst's estate at Southbridge in 1873.<sup>26</sup>

- (6) *Oakleigh* provides an excellent surviving example of Farr's work in the 1870s. Unlike the low verandahed homesteads of the '60s, this Italianate style villa is compact but more spacious, avoiding what might have been a stark appearance by the addition of a graceful encircling verandah and lively timber detailing. The generously sized sash windows (like those at Gould's *Hambledon*) are strongly accented by their crowning cornices resting on scrolled brackets, traditional stone features skilfully rendered in timber in typical colonial fashion. The decorative effect created by the shaped timber brackets under the eaves is enhanced by the positioning of small oblong panels of zinc mesh between them, to provide ventilation to the roof area.

Originally the verandah was supported by slender twin posts in which oval and circular timber detailing formed a pattern very similar to that seen at *Orwell* and *Rokeby* but these only remain on the semi-enclosed position at the north-west corner. The house has been altered little apart from modernising the kitchen and bathroom areas at the rear. The room which is now used as the kitchen has a curious internal window bringing light in from the hallway. Because there were originally single-storeyed kitchen and associated utility rooms at the rear of the house, this may have earlier been a necessary source of light.

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25. W.H. Orbell, The Papanui Parish, A Brief History, 1853-1928. Christchurch, 1928, p.23.

26. Tender, The Press, 17th Feb. 1873.

The almost central front door opened into an entrance hall 18 ft x 7 ft 9 ins with a 14 ft stud which is uniform throughout the house. The front reception function of the hall is defined by an archway beyond which a passageway at right angles gives access to the less public area of the house. On the left is the drawing room 18 ft x 16 ft with a 7 ft 9 in bay window on its eastern side. This gracious room features the original marble fire place and the wooden venetian blinds made in Manchester for the house in 1876. Its ceiling is ornamented by an elaborate plaster border and central rose, an example of the fine detailing and finish seen throughout the house. The dining room occupies the north-west corner while on the east behind the drawing room, the breakfast room has access to the verandah. A small porch on the west side of the house is enclosed with diagonal boarding and glass to shelter the entrance which allows direct communication with the farm office on the ground floor beside the stairs.

Farr incorporated his usual dog-leg stair, its string board ornamented as at the Lyttelton Parsonage. However, here the balusters are not of (7) turned wood but intricately patterned cast iron, to create an interesting, elegant feature. Upstairs, five spacious bedrooms are approached from a broad central hallway, again defined by archways and lit by a triple window over the stair.

The basic plan of *Oakleigh* was adapted and elaborated for another homestead commission in 1877, when Farr was asked by his old client George Gould, to design a residence for Springfield Station owned in partnership with Duncan Cameron.<sup>27</sup> An exuberant Edwardian style addition one room deep was erected across the front of the house about 1905 but a photograph in The Weekly Press<sup>28</sup> shows a side view which suggests that *Springfield*, when

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27. Tender, L.T., 23rd Oct. 1877.

28. The Weekly Press, 11th Nov. 1908, p.48.

first designed, was a hip-roofed Italianate villa with ground floor access onto the surrounding verandah. What were originally the drawing and dining rooms are now secondary rooms still splendidly furnished in their original mode. As at *Oakleigh*, modernising of the utility areas has not destroyed the character or the elegance of the house.

The stairway rises directly from the impressive entrance hall, this time with turned wooden balusters, but again with the patterned frieze slightly varied in its form to ornament the string board along the side. A smaller block built behind the house, probably containing just the service area and servants' quarters, prevented the lighting of the stairway by a large window, so here Farr effectively inserted a large decorative skylight in delicate coloured glass protected by a further clear glass enclosure.

Farr excelled in such inventive detailing rather than in the creation of innovative architectural forms. It was not his aim to seek or evolve a style of architecture expressing a New Zealand character. The first generation of migrants wished to establish links to their homeland by living in houses which related in style to what they knew, particularly after the first period in pioneer life when immediate basic shelter was no longer the sole requirement. Farr's designs were based on current fashion in English architecture, interpreted in New Zealand materials, reduced to an appropriate colonial scale and adapted to suit the particular needs of his clients.

Knowledge of contemporary building activities and technological developments was available from English journals, giving Farr a better idea of what was being achieved in the field of architecture in his homeland than elsewhere in New Zealand. He would have taken a keen interest in the



increasing uses for concrete, which in the 1870s was only beginning to be employed in New Zealand for purposes other than foundations. Farr's experiments with concrete for side-channelling from 1871 expanded his experience with the material, giving him an appreciation of its potential. F.W. Petre, who had strong beliefs in the strength and versatility of concrete, had been experimenting in Dunedin and in 1877 built St. Dominic's Priory with walls three and a half feet thick. One of the first concrete houses in New Zealand was Clifton House built in Auckland in 1871 while the first known use of tensile reinforcement in concrete was in 1878 in a store and flourmill at Ngaruawahia.<sup>29</sup>

In 1873, Farr, who was currently engaged as architect for a new Red Lion Hotel at Rangiora, advertised for tenders for '... the erection of a cottage on Red Lion property ...'.<sup>30</sup> Two concrete cottages which date from this period survive on the block of land once owned by Mr Brassingthwaite of the Red Lion Hotel. Brassingthwaite had a disagreement with local authorities over a creek bed on his land which he filled in, causing the creek to divert down the main street. The Road Board persisted in unblocking the bed and eventually took Brassingthwaite to court. He won the case, but consolidated his victory by having the concrete cottage erected over the filled gully.<sup>31</sup> One can imagine Brassingthwaite triumphantly consulting Farr over the design of a substantial building to be placed over the disputed area and their decision that a cottage built in concrete would conclude the episode emphatically. A very simple low four roomed building, the cottage has walls about one foot thick, the outside

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29. The L.T., 18th Oct. 1888, p.5, discussing the effects of a recent fire at Sunnyside Asylum refers to the 120 ft x 30 ft two-storied concrete block erected 'about sixteen years ago', to Mountfort's designs and describes it as, 'the first concrete building of so large a size erected in New Zealand'.

30. Tender, The Press, 7th Jan. 1873.

31. Rangiora Century Tribune, 25th Sept. 1978, p.16. D.N. Hawkins, Beyond the Waimakariri, A Regional History, Christchurch, 1957, p.230.

inscribed to appear as though the construction is from blocks of stone. This was an old English practice used when bricks were plastered over and is frequently seen on Farr's buildings. No tender has been found for the second concrete cottage but probably the success of the first prompted its repetition.

Farr built a large concrete house in Ashburton in 1877 for his daughter and son-in-law, Dr McBean Stewart.<sup>32</sup> Again with massive walls about one foot thick, this house was a simple single-storeyed rectangular block with an arched recess for the central front entrance and bay windows projecting from the two front rooms. The exterior is inscribed in imitation of stone blocks with a central 'keystone' over the arched entrance and stylised quoins at the corners.

Concrete was used by Farr in enormous quantities at Glenmark Station where he embarked on a comprehensive building programme in 1875. In G.H. Moore, Glenmark's notorious owner, he would have had a difficult client.<sup>33</sup> On two occasions in the 'sixties Moore's refusal to give shelter to travellers was blamed for their deaths and it was widely believed that he deliberately kept scabby sheep in his flocks to discourage would-be purchasers of his leasehold lands. He lived at Glenmark from 1858 in an unremarkable cottage as manager on what was originally a 50,000 acre block purchased at ten shillings an acre by himself and his partners. When the last of his partners, his brother-in-law Robert Kermode of Tasmania, died in 1870, the property had to be sold. At the dissolution sale in 1873, Moore purchased the bulk of the enlarged property, then went on to increase

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32. Tender, L.T., 11th Dec. 1877.

33. G.R. MacDonald, 'Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies', Card Index, Canterbury Museum, 1960, and D. Cresswell, Squatter and Settler in the Waipara County, Christchurch, 1952, Chapt.VII, p.89.

his holdings until by 1885, he was listed as the wealthiest settler in Canterbury owning 150,000 acres valued at £362,785.<sup>34</sup>

It must have been about 1874 when his financial position was established and secure that Moore consulted Farr about the grand-scale plans he had for building. At this date, with the Normal School rising impressively in Cranmer Square, esteem for Farr was high and he also had the reputation of a man who would give value for money - worthy architecture at minimum cost. As such he was the logical choice as architect for Moore, who though wealthy had a reputation for meanness. (He is said to have walked to Christchurch from Glenmark in his early years there and pitched a tent in Latimer or Cranmer Square to avoid hotel expenses.) Moore required an entire complex of buildings; a suitably imposing house for himself, a lesser one for his manager, a lodge at the main gates, accommodation for further staff and stables. Farr's wide range of abilities made him eminently suitable to supervise the construction of a massive concrete bridge and a complicated system of water control to provide Glenmark with the lakes, streams, fountains and ornamental ponds which graced its extensive gardens.

The first indication of work commencing was Farr's tender notice in the Lyttelton Times, 6th March 1875, for 'the erection of a Manager's House on the Glenmark Estate for G.H. Moore Esq.'. A relatively large dwelling of about ten rooms, this two-storeyed house was sited along a hillside so that at the rear no door or ground floor windows were possible but an internal courtyard allowed light into the utility rooms here.<sup>35</sup> The

(8) house has steeply pitched roofs and Gothic detailing which harmonises

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34. A Return of The Freeholders of New Zealand, Wellington, 1884.

35. Early this century, after Moore's death, part of the hillside was excavated to insert a door and windows at the rear.

with the later buildings. Dormers and the gables of the entrance porch were trimmed with a simple saw-tooth patterned bargeboard and finials, while the large gables were decorated by a more elaborate bargeboard trim. The pointed arch form of windows and doors was outlined by quoining originally emphasised by a lighter shade of paint, as were the other timber details. The quaint cottage-like appearance achieved by the asymmetric plan and the profusion of gables and dormers was not destroyed when a verandahed addition was placed across the front towards the end of the century. (It is not thought that Farr was involved at that date.)

- (9) The Gate Lodge, which has not altered in appearance since it was completed, is single-storeyed but has the same forms and details as the Manager's house.

Farr used a new method of construction at Glenmark. No doubt he and Moore discussed the strength, economy of construction and fireproof qualities of concrete and it was decided to use the material for the basic framework of the building. However, the appearance of concrete, even when inscribed to imitate stone, was not considered desirable for the houses. The exterior walls were clad with a casing of rusticated weatherboarding attached to a wooden framework let into the concrete. Although plaster and wallpaper was a satisfactory finish for the interior of the Manager's house and the Gate Lodge, timber panelling was used extensively through the main house.

- (10 & 11) Glenmark, known as 'Moore's Mansion', was already a legend by the time it was completed in 1881 or 1882 and its subsequent destruction by fire in January 1891 has increased the imaginative stories told of its appearance, contents and cost. Fortunately, photos remain to assist in distinguishing fact from fantasy about the house and further evidence is supplied by the

remnants of the building which remain.

Moore had chosen a site on rising ground and planted sheltering and ornamental trees which were well established by 1877 when the house was begun. Farr had tender notices in the Lyttelton Times on 15th February for 'concrete work at Glenmark House', on 28th April for 'carpenter's work' and on 6th August ... 'for plumbers work at Glenmark House. Labour only. None but efficient tradesmen need apply'. (This last proviso was not usually included by Farr and was perhaps an indication of Moore's close check that he was getting value for money.)

Unlike the majority of houses designed by Farr in Italianate style during the 1870s, Glenmark was Gothic. Perhaps Moore chose the style because he did not want to follow in the footsteps of his brother-in-law, Robert Kermode, who had built a fine Italianate villa at Mona Vale in Tasmania (1865-68). Two-storeyed with twenty-five to thirty rooms, the house faced east, set on a broad terrace between the tree clad hillside behind and lawns gently sloping down to a large artificial lake. A romantic, almost fairy-tale effect was given by the elaborately decorated gables on the steeply pitched lead roof with its surmounting central turret. Large bay windows, lavishly detailed, rose through the two storeys to give the principal rooms views over the lake while oriel windows of similar character allowed for the positioning of a handsome conservatory at the southern end and a verandah along the rear western side of the main block. The doorway, central in the main block and sheltered by a small projecting balcony, was impressively recessed in the manner of a Gothic cathedral. A plainer block which adjoined the main section of the northern end was also two-storeyed with simpler fenestration. Additional rooms were included in the attic space.

(12) The ground floor area was approximately 4,500 square feet so a conservative estimate of the house's total size, including service and attic rooms, would be 10,000 square feet. In today's terms, the original £15,000 cost of the house would become over \$500,000. With formal dining and drawing rooms opening from the central hallway, less formal rooms and service areas behind these and bedrooms upstairs, Farr simply enlarged and elaborated his usual house plan for this larger complex. The heated conservatory at the south, featuring exotic plants and a central fountain, provided the drawing room and its neighbour with an informal 'outdoor' extension and access to the garden. To the north a long crenellated concrete retaining wall faced the hillside and was fronted by further conservatories. At the far end a curious two-storeyed concrete structure, also crenellated, may have provided more storage space.

Everyone who discusses the Mansion delights in pointing out the odd fact that it, like the Manager's house, had no back door.<sup>36</sup> An image is brought to mind of a gloomy house fitted into the hillside but this is not the way it was. The house was built close to the hill so that two sides of an enclosed rear courtyard were bounded by crenellated concrete walls about fifteen feet high which faced the excavated hillsides. From the courtyard, which was at normal ground level, one could walk straight into five large store-rooms, two barrel-vaulted "cellars" dug into the hillside and three other rooms which formed the third side of the courtyard. These linked the main section of the house to the hillside. The courtyard, approximately thirty feet square, had a verandah around its perimeter to allow sheltered access to the various service rooms. The kitchen was on the north corner facing the courtyard. A covered walkway connected the courtyard and staff quarters with an external door locked by the head gardener at ten o'clock

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36. e.g. H.T. Hartley. The Press, 27th Mar. 1976, p.11, 'The back of the house contained no windows or doors.'

each night. There seems to have been access to the area behind the house not from the courtyard, but from a south facing door beside the store-rooms. The ground floor rooms in the main section of the house may also have opened out to the verandah running along the house's west side where an area of garden made a pleasant outlook with the gentle rise of the hillside beyond.

The interior of the house was finished in a fittingly grand manner. It is reported to have had extensive areas of encaustic tiles and parquet flooring and a marble staircase imported from Italy.<sup>37</sup> Magnificent fittings, ornaments and furnishings were brought from Europe including blinds from Florence. Douglas Cresswell, who collected old-timers' reminiscences of Moore and his mansion, referring to these blinds reports, '... woe betide the maid who allowed the sun an entry'.<sup>38</sup> This sums up the Victorian attitude to sunlit rooms, when anxiety over the possibility of having furnishings faded far outweighed any desire to enjoy sunshine indoors, (especially when conservatories fulfilled this purpose) and it explains what seems today to have been unthinking siting of houses away from the sun. Discussing the aspect and prospect of a gentleman's residence, Kerr recommended the siting of dwelling rooms to provide cool shade in the afternoon and considered the best lit views were those facing north (i.e. south in the Southern Hemisphere).<sup>39</sup>

Altogether, the house in its forty acres of grounds, meticulously cared for by six gardeners, was considered 'one of the most magnificent private residences in the colony'.<sup>40</sup> The complementary designs of the

37. L.T., 24th Jan. 1891, p.5. In a report of the fire it is stated that Mr S.P. Andrews of Christchurch made the marble stair and hall. Presumably marble blocks were imported from Italy.

38. Cresswell, p.101.

39. Kerr, p.82-3.

40. L.T., 24th Jan. 1891, p.5.

various buildings must have enhanced the picturesque quality of the total scene. Even the vast block of stables and associated farm buildings built solidly in concrete across the stream from the Manager's house, impress by the grandeur of their repeated arch form.<sup>41</sup>

In 1888, an earthquake damaged one of *Glenmark's* chimneys. Despite warnings that the roof should be opened to inspect the concealed portion of the chimney, Moore decided against such expenditure, presumably trusting in the fire-resistant materials used in the building and in the readiness of large water tanks in the attics. However, when the fire began on 23rd January 1891, its rapid progress prevented the use of the water and the house's construction did not resist the fire. Farr had allowed space between the concrete core and the inner lining of the rooms through which currents of air were regulated by ventilators. This proved a successful means of maintaining cool temperatures in summer but provided a tremendous draught which assisted the fire. The uninsured house was totally destroyed in a little over an hour, a devastating loss for seventy-eight year old Moore and a sad occasion for Farr to see one of his finest buildings lost.

Moore's daughter Annie, a very wealthy woman after her father's death, built *Mona Vale*<sup>42</sup> in Christchurch, surrounding it with attractive water gardens like those of *Glenmark*. The Gate House at *Mona Vale*, with the strong lines of its gabled roof and the Gothic detailing, is also reminiscent of Farr's lively design for *Glenmark*.

Any work Farr did after *Glenmark* must have seemed anti-climactic.

41. J. Stacpoole, Colonial Architecture in New Zealand, Wellington, 1976, Illustration, p.161.

42. *Mona Vale* was named for the Kermode family property at Tasmania. Water gardens are also a feature of the house there. See J.M. Freeland, Architecture in Australia, A History, England, 1968 - cover photograph.



There were no more really grand domestic commissions though he did continue (13) to build gentlemen's residences in Christchurch. In 1882 he built *Te Wepu*, a house on Papanui Road for H.R. Webb, brother-in-law to J.T. Peacock, and returned once more to staid symmetry with classic forms in timber.

*Te Wepu* is another version of his Italianate villa style, like *Oakleigh* and *Springfield*. There is more variety in the fenestration with a triple window grouping as well as paired and single sash windows. The second floor windows are placed higher in the wall plane so that their cornices break into the line of brackets under the eaves. The bull-nosed verandah extends beyond the facade of the house but does not return along the sides. It supports a shorter central balcony trimmed with wrought iron lace and a flat fretted balustrade. The verandah is also trimmed by a wider iron lace border and the twin timber supports are once more decorated with a combination of Farr's favorite oval and circular forms.

The house is formed of two blocks, a minor block for servants and less formal rooms sited at the rear of the principal one, as at *Springfield*. (*Glenmark's* two blocks were side by side.) *Te Wepu's* main stairway, like the one at *Oakleigh*, rises from a cross passageway and is lit by a large arched window patterned with coloured glass. An arch springing from elaborate corbels spans the ten feet wide entrance hall and this motif is repeated upstairs around the broad central hallway lit by a plain skylight. At the front of the house the spacious entrance hall, drawing and dining rooms are elegant and imposing, suitably expressing the owner's status. Accommodation for servants, the kitchen and utility rooms were placed discreetly at the rear on the south side of the house.

At *Te Wepu* Farr reworked tried and trusted formulas of plan and design to provide a comfortable family home. Though the style was quite

unexceptional for Christchurch in 1882, the house was well proportioned and attractively dressed with architectural embellishments. It was conveniently planned, soundly built of good quality materials and finished with fine attention to details. Comfort, convenience and economy were balanced with an appropriate degree of Victorian pretension. It was in this way that Farr satisfied his clients over the years.

## CHAPTER THREE

## PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Although Farr built many houses during his career, his work in domestic architecture was not well known. Many of his most significant houses were either out in the country or set within enclosing grounds in the city. His reputation was made with more public buildings, in the street architecture which was described in 1867 as being of a 'compact, plain and suitable style'.<sup>1</sup> Shops and offices were seen by the numerous passers-by in the street and by the clients or customers who had business inside. Hotels attracted a good deal of attention within the city or country scene by their size and appearance. In the nineteenth century, as today, it was good business to have a distinctive building, one which was in sympathy with its neighbours yet stood out because it had extra quality or architectural merit. The public buildings Farr designed also became well known, bringing him acclaim at the time they were built and continuing as a reminder of his abilities.

- (14) The Mechanics' Institute was a building which focused attention on Farr's skills as a designer. Its site on the north-west corner of Hereford Street and Cambridge Terrace was a relatively isolated one in 1863, with a background of sandhills where Maori bones and skulls were found. It stood out as a landmark in those days, a dignified two-storeyed structure which was 'the resort of the studious and more intellectually inclined'.<sup>2</sup> The Institute, which performed the function of a public library, had selected Farr's plan from others entered in their competition, 'as being

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1. The Press, 29th Oct. 1867. Article about Farr becoming Manager of the Fancy Repository.  
 2. The Weekly Press, 29th Sept. 1897, p.43.

the least costly and affording the greatest amount of convenience besides possessing a pleasing architectural appearance'.<sup>3</sup>

No detailed contemporary description of the building was published but it seems from comments made that a more comprehensive complex was planned. However because of costs only part of the project was initially built. For this reason the block Farr designed was placed close to the Hereford Street border of the site. The earliest photographs show a long rectangular wing facing Hereford Street. Later photographs taken from along Cambridge Terrace when Armson's building was added in 1875 show that there was a projecting timber wing between the two buildings which probably contained the original entrance.

The building, for which the contract price was £1,169,<sup>4</sup> was of timber in Italianate style. Illustrations show that there was a pediment style gable in the hipped roof and this central section of the building was defined by paired pilasters, as were the corners. An emphatic string course was provided by a double horizontal timber border where the name 'Mechanics' Institute' was displayed. Windows in groups of three were modestly finished with a narrow cornice. On the upper floor the Palladian form was used except for the central body where the rectangular grouping was given a simple arched frame extending up into the gable. Altogether a plain but elegant effect was achieved.

Two other libraries planned by Farr were built. Throughout Christchurch small district libraries were established with the help of grants from the Provincial Government and in 1874, Farr designed a small

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3. The Press, 8th Sept. 1863, p.3.

4. Additional to this cost was Farr's fee of £80; £20 as premium and 5% of the contract price.

building to serve as library for the St. Albans district.<sup>5</sup> No doubt he received this commission through knowing some of the men like Peacock and Garrick who were involved in establishing the library. Little is known about the building except that it was 30 ft x 18 ft and was described at its formal opening in November 1874 as being, 'fitted with every convenience' and 'very creditable to the district'.<sup>6</sup> Built on the north side of St. Albans Street the library did not retain its original function for many years but was later used as a hall.

When a library was planned for Akaroa in November 1873 land was donated by Dr Watkins and Farr prepared plans and specifications free of charge. At this time he was very busy, his prestige at its zenith, yet as soon as he heard of the proposal for the library he offered his services (15) for the benefit of the community to which he had belonged. The illustration shows the delightful little building as it was when completed in May 1876. It was described then as having 'a large reading room thirty feet long and two small rooms, one of which will be used as a reading room for ladies'.<sup>7</sup> Although it remains today, the character of the building has been altered as it has lost some of its detailing and the facade has been given new windows and a porch.

In Farr's design the paired sash windows were trimmed by emphatic cornices resting on decorative brackets, very like the scheme at *Oakleigh*. The gable ends of the roof featured fretted bargeboards and circular ventilators and were crowned by finials. Simple classical pilasters completed the corners and there were ornamental brackets under the eaves. A small arched hood with a fine fretwork border formed a porch over the central doorway. Though not a large or imposing building the Akaroa library

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5. Tender, The Press, 14th April, 1874.

6. The Press, 17th Nov. 1874, p.3.

7. The Weekly Press, 29th May, 1875, p.16.

was carefully planned and skilfully ornamented to give it an appropriate dignity. Designing it was a gracious gesture of thanks from one of the district's distinguished early settlers.

In Christchurch, the name Mechanics' Institute gave way to the Literary Institute and then the building became known as the Public Library under the control of Canterbury College's Board of Governors. In mid-1874 Mountfort, Armson, Farr and Strouts were requested to prepare competitive designs for a new library. These designs were due to be received on 27th May and the competing architects asked for an extension of time until 27th June. Although Armson was unable to meet this deadline as the others did, handing in his design on 1st July, he won the commission. This upset Mountfort, Strouts, Farr, some members of the public, and of the Board of Governors who protested to no avail.<sup>8</sup> At the end of July Farr wrote a well reasoned, calm letter criticising the conduct of the competition and what he considered the inferior character of Armson's plan.<sup>9</sup> Neither his nor the other competing designs were described but from newspaper reports it seems that the architectural style of Armson's design made it the committee's choice. Perhaps Mountfort's Gothic design with an octagonal reading room was considered too ambitious and perhaps Farr continued in the manner of his earlier building, producing a design which was too simple for popular taste in the 1870s.

Farr built two Town Halls, one in Christchurch and one in Ashburton. Both were the scenes of important civic and cultural occasions but neither continued to serve its original function long.

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8. The Press, 10th July, 1874, Reporting meeting of the Canterbury College Board of Governors.

9. L.T., 29th July, 1874, p.3.

(16) The Christchurch Town Hall, completed in September 1864 was designed to meet specific requirements set by the building committee of the Town Hall Company. They wished for a spacious hall to cover all the area available on the site in High Street alongside the Town Hall Mountfort had designed in 1857. Durable materials were specified and with cost restricted to £2,500 architectural detailing was to be subordinated to the main considerations of size, comfort and good acoustics.

Farr satisfied the committee with a plan for a hall 81 ft x 34 ft, about 34 ft high to be built of rubble stone with quoins, string course and facings in grey freestone. Seven wrought iron elliptical girders resting on stone brackets would span a ceiling panelled in different coloured woods and support the slate roof.

When sanctioned by the committee, details of Farr's plan were discussed in The Press. It was considered that,

'The front will have little pretence to architectural merit being a dead wall of stone work with a single door and a row of arcading above, every alternative recess being a window and the intermediate ones filled with brickwork of two colours. ... In point of architecture it [the hall] will be able to claim one merit at all events, and that in the judgement of critics not a mean one, especially in these days of debased and meretricious taste. It will reject all sham. It will be of stone, iron and wood and not pretending to be what they are not.'<sup>10</sup>

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10. The Press, 9th Jan, 1864, p.2.

These comments seem likely to have been made by Fitzgerald and it was probably he who also wrote the lengthy description of the Town Hall when it was completed.<sup>11</sup> The writer found 'the external aspect of the building far from promising', though he felt the committee had been wise in making architectural detailing a lesser priority and praised again the honesty of construction. However he believed 'the brickwork in the arches a mistake', because its bright colour tended to nullify the planned effect of light and shadow. Unfortunately existing photographs do not show what form the 'brickwork of two colours' took.

Strong approval was again given for the use of unconcealed iron girders in the roof, - 'an instance of truth in art which cannot be too highly recommended for we hold it one of the first elements in all that is noble in architecture that the principles of construction be boldly avowed and displayed'. Pugin would have approved! Farr was high principled in his use of materials when circumstances allowed but he could easily put the principles of honesty in construction aside when expediency required.

Commendation for Farr's general planning did not carry through to the details. 'The dark staring blue' chosen for the wrought iron girders was considered a mistake and the corbels on which they rested were, 'huge in size and vulgar in form to an inconceivable degree'. The Press writer continued, 'A very heavy and vulgar cornice runs the length of the side walls'. Farr had provided the stone cornice at about twelve feet from the floors as a decorative and practical feature on which a row of kerosene lamps could be placed to light the hall. The committee had abandoned this idea which the Press writer considered a superior one, in favour of 'the

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11. The Press, 15th Sept. 1864, p.2.



old barbarisms of hideous chandeliers, ropes, pullies and weights, choking up the vault of the building and marring its whole effect'. Instead of Farr's admirable plan for lighting the Town Hall, 'as a great building should be it was to be lit like a tavern parlour'.

The only photograph of the interior of the Town Hall, taken on the occasion of a breakfast for Lord Lyttelton on 6th Feb. 1868,<sup>12</sup> shows nothing of the 'vulgar' cornice or corbels. The Hall became a popular venue for a variety of events and its acoustics, general comfort and convenience proved to be all the committee had hoped for. After the opening concert held on 16th September 1864 there was generous praise in the Press for the acoustics, 'This after all is the feature of principal importance in a public hall and the public are greatly indebted to the architect Mr Farr for his success in providing them with a first rate music room'.<sup>13</sup>

By Victorian standards, Farr's Town Hall presented a staid exterior. A scholarly Classic Gothic or Renaissance facade would have been considered more appropriate than the simple Romanesque forms he used. In England at this time civic rivalry was responsible for the erection of many imposing Town Halls, large, lavishly detailed symbols of status. Nothing like these complexes in size or grandeur was wanted in Christchurch by the Town Hall Company who simply required a convenient public hall but it was difficult

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12. W.J.A. Brittenden, A Dream Come True, The Christchurch Town Hall. Christchurch, 1972, Illustration, p.15.

13. Shortly afterwards, the Provincial Government debating the proposed expenditure of £44,925 for public building, had their attention drawn to the success and modest costs of the Town Hall which was upheld as an example of what could be achieved. Provincial Government Records in the Canterbury Museum Archives include a letter from Farr and Cuff dated 9th Sept. 1864 asking for opportunities to design for the Provincial Government, but their services were not required. This was just before the designing capabilities of Farr were recommended in the meeting reported, Press, 23rd Sept. 1864.

for Victorians to accept a simply decorated building when to them, it was ornament that gave architectural distinction.

Farr concentrated on meeting the Company's needs of capacity and solidity then dressed the basic facade with Romanesque motifs. A tall recessed arched doorway was placed centrally and over this the arcade extended to the full height of the walls. High in the gable a <sup>round</sup> ventilator completed the scheme. Farr is not known to have designed any other buildings which could be described as Romanesque in style though he frequently used rounded arches and placed circular motifs in gables, often as a ventilator, but sometimes just as decorative devices. Peacock's *Hawkesbury*, designed at about the same time as the Town Hall, has circular decorative ventilators, as does the Normal School ten years later and even the stables at *Glenmark* have a round opening in the solid concrete gable.

Romanesque architecture enjoyed a minor revival in Victorian England, particularly for churches. It was used by Roman Catholics, Non-conformists and some Anglican churches (for example Wyatt and Brandon's St. Mary's Wilton, 1840-46), but there were few examples of its use in New Zealand. A source for Farr's Town Hall facade may have been Iffley Church Oxfordshire, c.1175 where the west front features similar elements. He may have known this building, not far from where he lived, and would certainly have seen it illustrated.

The next occasion when Farr was called on to design a large hall was in 1870, for the Masonic Lodge which required a new building in Manchester Street. Farr was a Lodge member and took a prominent part in the traditional Masonic procession and ceremony on the occasion when the foundation stone was laid on 9th March. This hall, costing £685, was 60 ft x 30 ft built of timber on a stone foundation and completed with a corrugated iron roof.

Though the foundation stone laying ceremony was well described in the Lyttelton Times, very little description of the building was given and it was probably a very basic design.<sup>14</sup> A booklet, published to mark the 75th anniversary of St. Augustine's Lodge, No. 4, illustrates the Manchester Street building of 1870 and shows a splendid two-storeyed classical facade.<sup>15</sup> Without mentioning any architect, the booklet refers to brick additions costing £1,141 made in 1882 and presumably this is what the illustration shows. There is nothing to link Farr to this formal scholarly building and it is unlike anything he is known to have designed.<sup>16</sup>

In Ashburton a Town Hall Company, much like the one in Christchurch, purchased a section on the main street and in 1877 Farr advertised for tenders for the erection of their Town Hall. Dr McBean Stewart, Farr's son-in-law, was probably his contact with the people in this area where he later refers to having designed, 'a large number of buildings', unfortunately without elaborating on what they were.<sup>17</sup> The Ashburton Town Hall opened on 22nd July 1878 with a ball which the Lyttelton Times described without discussing the building.<sup>18</sup>

It was larger and had a more complex plan than the Christchurch Town Hall. Within the overall dimension of 100 ft x 60 ft there were the main hall with two ante-rooms, a gallery, several meeting rooms and offices. Simple classical details were added to the facade and probably just to the

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- 14. Tender, L.T., 2nd Feb. 1870, Account of foundation sone ceremony, L.T., 23rd March, 1870, Supplement, p.1.
  - 15. St. Augustine Lodge, No. 4. 75th Anniversary. Christchurch, 1928, p.19.
  - 16. L.T., 16th Feb. 1877, has a tender signed Strouts for a Masonic Hall in Manchester Street, and on 24th Feb. 1877 the proposed building was described. It matches the photo in the booklet but this does not tally with the account of events.
  - 17. S.C. Farr, 'The Story of Samuel Charles Farr', Farr family papers, Wellington.
  - 18. Tender, L.T., 15th Oct. 1877, Description of opening, L.T., 24th July 1878.

front section of the timber building's sides. Pilasters extending to the full height of the building divided the facade into three bays with tall round-headed windows placed one above the other at each side of the central doorway. An undecorated flat circle of timber faced the pediment to complete the plain scheme of architectural embellishment. A close resemblance in plan and decorative treatment can be seen between the halls and the Non-conformist churches Farr designed. (See Chapter 5) The dimensions and the building materials used for the Masonic Hall were similar to those of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church (1867) and the planning of a gallery over the ground floor rooms at the Ashburton Town Hall was varied for the Leeston Presbyterian Church (1878) where the gallery was built over the vestibule.

On the occasion of the Governor's visit to Ashburton on 6th Sept. 1878 when the first train travelled between Christchurch and Dunedin the Town Hall was the scene of a splendid civic function.<sup>19</sup> However such events were rare in early Ashburton and the Town Hall Company enjoyed only limited success with their venture. By 1885 difficulties forced the company to wind up and Farr's building was used for retail purposes until the need for a new bank on the site caused it to be demolished in 1966.

Just before the Town Hall opened in Ashburton in July 1878, a description was published of a proposed hotel planned by Farr for Baring Square, Ashburton. Details were given of the disposition of 37 bedrooms, dining, sitting, smoking, billiard rooms, bar and so on, 'which would eclipse any of the others in size and design now in existence in Ashburton'.<sup>20</sup> Nothing further was heard of this particular building but Farr was quite

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19. The Town Hall on the occasion of the Governor's visit is illustrated in B. Silverwood, Ashburton Borough Council, 1878-1978, Ashburton, 1978, p.21.

20. L.T., 16th July, 1878, p.2.

frequently involved in the design of hotels and some are still used today as taverns.

In his earliest years in Christchurch, Farr made alterations and additions to a number of the unremarkable timber hotels in the city. One of the more interesting buildings he worked on was Collins Hotel in Hereford Street for which Farr and Cuff requested tenders on 17th August 1864. This building, now known as the Occidental Hotel in Latimer Square, is still being used as a tavern but it is difficult to assess what contribution the 1864 additions made to its character. It was extended in length and a wing was added at the rear in brick. An early photograph<sup>21</sup> shows that it always had its distinctive double verandahs, but Farr may have been responsible for the inclusion of decorative cast-iron trimming, which makes the hotel such an interesting example of colonial architecture in Christchurch where fretted timber ornament was more common. Earlier in 1864 Farr built a house for C.W. Turner near Merivale which was also lavishly trimmed with cast-iron 'lace' on double storeyed verandahs.

Farr's first known complete design for a hotel was the Golden Fleece, rebuilt at the corner of Armagh and Colombo Streets in 1866. The Canterbury Museum has an early photograph which shows a plain wooden building with single sash windows spaced along the upper floor.<sup>22</sup> A little variety was provided by irregularly arranged paired windows on the ground floor, flanking the corner entrance. The fenestration expresses the different functions of the ground floor rooms. Two shops were included at the Colombo Street end of the building, but more were probably added with later additions.

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21. J. Andersen, Old Christchurch, Christchurch, 1949, p.118. A.J. Mair and J.A. Hendry, More Homes of the Pioneers and Other Buildings, Christchurch, 1974, No. 53 illustrates the hotel as it is today.

22. Canterbury Museum photographs, No. 3840.

A photograph dated about 1880 shows the hotel with a continuous verandah.<sup>23</sup>  
A simple parapet where the hotel's name was displayed, completed the facade.

Much more carefully embellished was the building designed by Farr as the third White Hart Hotel in High Street.<sup>24</sup> The Golden Fleece Hotel and the White Hart were the subject of a brief item on 'City Improvements' in the Canterbury Times in March 1867 when it was stated that the White Hart had 'sprung from its old condition of a V hut into a vast and imposing structure'.<sup>25</sup> The V hut had been superceded by a small gabled building 1851-2 but this now proved inadequate and Farr designed a new building in the Italian Palazzo style.

This was the first known usage in Christchurch of what was to become a popular style for hotels, as well as for banks and commercial premises. In vogue in England since Sir Charles Barry's use of it in London for the Traveller's Club in 1829 and the Reform Club in 1837, the style was widely used in New Zealand in timber versions as well as stone and plastered brick. Paint emphasised the fine timber details on the facade Farr planned. Emphatic brackets supported the straight cornices over the ground floor windows and the triangular pediments over the windows on the second floor. A pierced parapet topped the surmounting cornice and was ornamented by urns crowning each of the pilasters which divided the facade. The line of the pilasters was interrupted at the level of the string course by a bolder form of the window brackets and at the door these supported a projecting hood which served as the base for a small balcony sheltering the entrance.

23. Andersen, p.334.

24. The Canterbury Museum has a series of photos of this hotel over the years and in Old Christchurch Andersen includes two views, p.356 and p.367.

25. Canterbury Times, 23rd Mar. 1867, p.4.

Standing on the parapet high over the main doorway, a magnificent model white hart advertised the hotel.

No other building Farr designed had triangular pediments over the windows in Italian Renaissance style, though some aspects of this building relate to his other work. The lower floor windows are similar to those at *Oakleigh* and *Hambledon* in their ornamentation and generous size. The White Hart's large single pane sash windows as well as its styling must have been most impressive in 1867 making this handsome building worthy of being described as a city improvement.

The building Farr designed in 1871 to replace the burned Canterbury Hotel<sup>26</sup> at Lyttelton was more like the Golden Fleece, economically built in timber to provide adequate accommodation without emphasis on architectural character. Another hotel destroyed by fire was the Red Lion at (17) Rangiora and Farr designed a replacement building in 1872 for the site at the corner of High and Collins Street.<sup>27</sup> He did not re-use the rather formal Renaissance styling which blended well into the city scene but planned a conventional building with the two storeys sheltered by verandahs along its full length and sides.

Built of brick with walls ten inches thick and roofed with corrugated iron, the hotel contained twenty-three rooms. There was a bar and bar-parlour on the ground floor with a brick cellar beneath. Besides the kitchen, servants' rooms and larder, there were a billiard room, commercial dining and two sitting rooms and also two bedrooms on the ground floor. Further bedrooms were on the second floor and a suite of four rooms for private apartments which had access to the 'balcony, 109 ft long by 8 ft

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26. Tender, The Press, 20th May, 1871.

27. Tender, The Press, 19th and 23rd Dec. 1872.

wide securely roofed in with a conservatory at one end'.<sup>28</sup>

To diminish any likeness the hotel might have had to a large house Farr added a decorative parapet above the concave curve of the balcony's roof. This was decorated with a frieze of circular wreaths and blocks which can be seen as a loose interpretation of the frieze associated with the Doric order. Centrally a curved gable featured the hotel's name. The wide verandah was ornamented at the top of the ground floor supports by diminishing sized circles within slender arches springing from simple capitals. A fretted balustrade and a narrow border along the balcony's roof added final decorative touches to the hotel, described in 1877 as 'most commodious and genteel'.<sup>29</sup>

Although the Red Lion no longer accommodates guests and has lost much of its character along with its verandahs, it continues as a tavern with the well worn stone step of the bar testifying to its long popularity.

The hotel Farr built at East Malvern (Sheffield) in 1875 was another plainly styled building, though it is reported to have had a grand interior with high quality finishings and a great deal of well polished brass.<sup>30</sup> It has not survived, but one at Amberley is still being used as a tavern.<sup>31</sup> Despite modernising, its basic form is still recognisable when compared to early photographs in the bar.

28. L.T., 13th Dec. 1876. Notice for sale of Red Lion Hotel with description of the buildings.

29. Rangiora Century Tribune, 25th Sept. 1978, p.16. An article on the Red Lion quotes the diary of Lucy May Fraser, a young lady who stayed at the hotel on 18th and 19th Nov. 1877.

30. Tender, L.T., 1st May, 1875. Illustration in V. McLennan, Coaching Days and Accommodating Ways, Christchurch, 1972, p.34.

31. At Amberley Farr made alterations to the Crown Hotel for Mr H, McLean, tender, L.T., 12th Aug. 1878. This is now the Amberley Hotel. He also built the Railway Hotel in 1878, tender, L.T., 29th Mar. 1878, which is still being used.



(18) The Grosvenor Hotel<sup>32</sup> in Christchurch, which has been dramatically altered inside to suit contemporary tavern requirements, retains much of its original exterior character. Farr planned it in 1877, in a style of architecture suitable for the city, giving it an emphatic cornice and parapet with central gable to display its name as he did at the Red Lion. Like the Golden Fleece, the Grosvenor's corner site, on Madras Street and Moorhouse Avenue, allowed the main door to be angled across the corner, the usual practice for nineteenth-century hotels. This and another door facing Moorhouse Avenue are strongly accented by arched pediments supported on pillars. The single arch-topped windows have plain surrounds simply finished with a keystone.

The building was constructed solidly in brick, though not with adequate strength for present day standards. The timber framing was organised in the heavy English manner customary before the lighter balloon framing method, introduced from California via Australia, became widely used in New Zealand from about this period. When the hotel was altered,<sup>33</sup> it was found that steel bracing was necessary to ensure the stability of the brick walls but the timber framing was sound. Despite the rotting of the piles the floor remained secure because they had been so firmly attached in the wall framing. The roof of clay tiles had lasted well and only needed replacement when the alterations involved too much destructive handling.

The Grosvenor's cornice was constructed from Oamaru stone before plaster was added and shaped with a metal template to form the crowning

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32. Tender, L.T., 10th Feb. 1877.

33. Like the Normal School (see Chapter 4) the structural strength of the building has been thoroughly assessed by experts. Mr Whiteside of Lion Breweries assisted with information about the Grosvenor's construction.

border. The wreath motifs were added last. Moulded brick was used for the parapet, including the circular pattern which was probably a stock motif as it appeared on other buildings at this time, not only those by Farr.<sup>34</sup>

A description of a proposed hotel planned by Farr for the corner of Kilmore and Barbadoes Streets appeared in the Lyttelton Times in 1877.<sup>35</sup> It was to be 'in the Italian style with pilasters of massive chamfered quoins at the angles and circular pierced balustrading above the cornice'. Though using the same parapet design as for the Grosvenor Hotel this design would have been in keeping with the current move toward more elaborate detailed street architecture. Hotels and other buildings were becoming larger and more ostentatious in their ornamentation showing a marked change from the buildings of the earlier years.

Farr's hotel designs largely followed these trends except at the White Hart in 1867 when he introduced the Italianate Palazzo style for hotel purposes to Christchurch. The White Hart and the Grosvenor were designed quite specifically for the city environment and the Red Lion was suited for the main street of a country town. Farr never received a really large city hotel commission in the 1870s or 1880s and there are no examples after 1878 to show whether he would have continued to move with the times to design more florid buildings.

The various commercial and office buildings Farr planned for Christchurch over almost thirty years show a progression in styling that remained in the main stream of development. In 1867 it was accurate to describe his street architecture as 'compact, plain and suitable' in style,

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34. An example is the Southern Cross Hotel built by Maddison at the corner of Moorhouse Avenue and Grove Road.

35. L.T., 9th April 1877, p.2.

but through the 'seventies it was considered 'suitable' for hotels and commercial buildings to be of more lavish design. Early photographs of the city show a number of the buildings Farr planned and give a better idea of how they appeared when new than do the surviving buildings which have been stripped of their ornamentation and altered quite extensively. Farr had a large number of commissions in this category of architecture which formed a significant proportion of his work.

Two of Farr's early buildings are shown diagonally opposite each other on the corners of Cashel and High Streets in a photograph by D.L. Mundy, dated 1868.<sup>36</sup> Nearer to the viewer is the two-storeyed timber block of offices for Messrs Aikman and Wilson.<sup>37</sup> The oblique view shows that the building featured tall round-headed windows divided by carefully detailed timber pilasters. A string course projected strongly, providing a strong horizontal accent, as did the cornice. A timber parapet probably had the name of the office painted along its High Street facade.

'Mr Kiver's New Store' was described in the Lyttelton Times in April 1865<sup>38</sup> and this is interesting as the earliest account of a privately commissioned work by Farr as a city improvement. Across from Aikman and Wilson's offices, Kiver's Cashel Street store was in a block of two shops.

'The side walls and those composing the back of the building are made of rubble, the front being of ashlar work. The effect of the whole is that of a good substantial building, the large blocks of stone with a chiseled face having a massive yet simple appearance; this is heightened by a well designed and bold cornice also of stone which runs the entire extent of the building. A parapet of pierced

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36. Andersen, p.368.

37. Tender, The Press, 19th Mar. 1864.

38. Tender, The Press, 17th Oct. 1864. Description L.T., 13th April, 1865, p.5.

stone, which surmounts the house gives an air of lightness to it and serves to relieve the plain and almost severe character of the edifice.'

The description omits reference to the slender pilasters which accented the corners and marked the division between the two shops. These are apparent in photographs taken at a later date than Mundy's 1868 view.

The parapet and cornice were similar to those which crowned the White Hart hotel, around the corner from Kiver's shop in High Street and by 1880, the buildings which were erected between the two featured the same type of parapet to give this corner a fine appearance of continuity. A photograph dated 1900 shows that the upper floor windows in buildings along to the corner from the White Hart Hotel were given matching triangular pediments.<sup>39</sup> Farr may have been responsible for some of the buildings added here but other architects were involved in later extensions to the White Hart.

Farr's Crystal Palace building of 1868 on Colombo Street facing the Market Square was his largest block of shops and offices to date. Apart from the small photograph of the building which Farr signed and dated (see Chapter 1<sup>034</sup>) other Canterbury Museum photographs show the large rectangular block with its longer side on Colombo Street. This facade, twice the length of the one facing north, had four bays defined by pilasters, with two arch-headed windows in each bay on the upper floor. A further bay was angled across the corner. The hipped iron roof was screened from the front by a parapet and simple branched pillars supported the verandah. The building appears to have been an enlarged version in brick, of what he had built for Kiver.

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39. Canterbury Museum photographs, No. 3023. High Street.

Photographs provide more questions than answers about two tenders which Farr advertised for commercial buildings in 1870. The Lyttelton Times 18th January 1870, had Farr's request to builders for 'the erection of a New Shop for Messrs Beath and Co. Cashel Street', and on 23rd July 1870 tenders were required for 'additions to Cashel House'. A view of Beaths and Cashel House (later the D.I.C.) taken by Dr Barker on the 6th February 1872 shows no alteration in the buildings from when Mundy's 1868 photograph was taken. Possibly the dates are wrong, or Farr's alterations may just have been internal ones at Cashel House and the proposed building for Beaths did not go ahead.

In 1872 Farr designed 'a block of brick buildings in the Market Square for G. Gould Esq'.<sup>40</sup> Farr had been working again at Gould's house on Bealey Avenue (the tender for the erection of a pitching stable and yard was advertised in The Press on 1st May 1872), and built a two-storeyed block of shops and offices on Gould's section on the corner of Kilmore and Victoria Streets, the site of a car park for the present Town Hall. From distant photographs, this block seems to have been similar in size and design to the Crystal Palace building on the other side of the Market Square.

Shortly after this Farr designed a two-storeyed block of brick buildings for Reverend T.L. Fisher replacing a timber building which ran through from Hereford to High Street close to the corner.<sup>41</sup> On each facade two shops were clearly defined by pilasters of rusticated blocks, and pillars support the arched tops of the windows. The cornice, with decorative brackets, seems to be identical to those on the White Hart Hotel and Kiver's building and the parapet, pierced by circles, is a modification

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40. Tender, The Press, 20th Dec. 1872.

41. Tender, The Press, 15th Jan. 1873.

of the solid Red Lion Hotel's parapet. This building, which shows a stronger surface relief than earlier works, is little changed today. Fisher eventually bought the corner section adjoining Farr's building and employed Armson to erect the elaborate three-storeyed Venetian Gothic block in 1880, eclipsing Farr's more prosaic work.

The Lyttelton Times, on the 9th October 1875, discussing the latest 'City Improvements', described the building planned by Farr for C.W. Turner on the north corner of Cashel Street and Oxford Terrace, as in 'the Italian style of architecture'. This building is still being used today but has been stripped of its ornament and it is difficult to accurately assess its details from a photograph of Cashel Street in 1878.<sup>42</sup> It is a larger and more elaborately decorated block than the Fisher building, its cornice being ornamented with wreaths between brackets as on the Grosvenor Hotel.

Farr's work gained good publicity from accounts in the newspapers.

Less than five months after the Turner block was described the planned (19) building for Montgomery and Company on the south-east corner of Tuam and Colombo Streets was featured in the Lyttelton Times regular column on 'City Improvements'.<sup>43</sup> 'Modern street architecture' was the definition given for the style Farr used for this three-storeyed stuccoed brick building which remains well preserved in the upper two floors of the facade, although the ground floor with its boldly emphasised corner entrance has been completely altered. This building shows Farr's progression to a greater elaboration of details and a stronger relief with the inclusion of bolder projections and deeply inset windows. Pilaster-like bands bisect the facade, rusticated at the ground floor and containing recessed panels on the

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42. Andersen, p.400.

43. Tender, L.T., 6th Mar. 1876. Description, 25th Mar. 1876.

upper floors. The curved tops of the second floor windows spring from flanking pillars which feature capitals described in 1876 as, 'in a new style and no doubt [they] will be much appreciated by those who take an interest in such things'. The capitals show spreading leaves and do not seem particularly novel though they were not the conventional style. Perhaps Farr was emulating Armson who had invented capitals using New Zealand motifs for the Clarke building, 109 Hereford Street, in 1871 and the Strange and Company building in High Street in 1874, but Farr's capitals are less readily identified.

The cornice on the Montgomery building is ornamented by brackets alternating with medallions and there are further floral brackets at the base. The parapet has the same design of moulded brick circles which was used on the Grosvenor Hotel in the following year.<sup>44</sup>

Two adjoining warehouses in Manchester Street designed by Farr in 1878 used the same basic motifs of decoration which had been seen on his recent commercial buildings but these were built in concrete.<sup>45</sup> In 1878 Farr was building Dr McBean Stewart's house in Ashburton and was well underway with buildings at Glenmark but this was his first known use of concrete for Christchurch street architecture. In Lyttelton in 1877 he had built a concrete block of offices for Miles Hassal and Company.<sup>46</sup> Simply styled, with an archway giving access through to yards at the rear, the block today is little different from its original form. The warehouses at 112-114 Manchester Street, with all ornament removed, bear no resemblance to the lavishly detailed block described at the time.

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44. Montgomery and Company also engaged Farr to design a block of shops and offices in Ashburton. Tender, L.T., 19th Dec. 1877.

45. Tender, L.T., 4th Feb. 1878. Description, 7th Feb. 1878, p.2.

46. Tender, L.T., 28th July 1877.

For Edward Reece, Farr built *Forres House* in 1864 and in September (20) 1878 he designed new premises in Colombo Street for this prosperous iron-monger.<sup>47</sup> The three-storeyed brick building with a 34 ft frontage on to Colombo Street extended back 58 ft and had cellarage of the same area. Iron pillars were used to support each floor to give the required strength for storing weighty goods on the third floor.

A distinct progression can be seen with the design of this building. The facade was dominated by the heavy cornice which projected two feet six inches and supported a tall parapet of arches springing from Corinthian piers. In the centre of the parapet was a white stone panel on which the arms of Sheffield and Birmingham were raised in relief. Arched sash windows were spaced across the upper floor with plain projected hoods resting on brackets. Five round-headed windows on the second floor, graduating down in size from the tallest central one, were separated by slender white stone pillars. The liveliness of the detailing here was enhanced by the use of white rock stone and grey stone from the Cass Peak quarry combined with brick for constructional colour contrast.

Farr moved further away from his earlier street architecture with his design for another old acquaintance, John Anderson, whose foundry was in the block between Cashel and Lichfield Streets. He required an office and warehouse building facing Lichfield Street and Farr designed his two-storeyed building using the same materials as for Reece's premises, but in (21) Venetian Gothic style. A photograph of the building published in 1900 and a description in the Lyttelton Times give a clear idea of the building's original appearance.<sup>48</sup> The cornice and parapet have been removed along with

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47. Tender, L.T., 24 Sept. 1878. Description 25th Sept. 1878, Supplement.

48. Tender, L.T., 8th Jan. 1879. Description 25th Sept. 1878, Supplement. Illustration, Souvenir Catalogue 1850-1900 Canterbury Jubilee Industries Exhibition, Christchurch. 1900, p.60.



other ornamental detailing and a large sign obscures the arched tops of the ground floor windows, so that today the building (at 43 Lichfield Street) shows little of its former distinction.

From a plinth of grey stone rise pillars with floriated capitals to divide the arcade-like row of Gothic arched windows on the ground floor. The arches are outlined in alternating blocks of light and dark stone. The upper floor windows have shallow arched tops, their shape emphasised by light stone facings above them. Slender pillars flank each window and pairs of alternating coloured blocks of stone separate them. The outline of the cornice's lower edge, which was shaped from the light stone in Venetian arches, is all that remains of this feature. The massive parapet was formed of corresponding arches.

Anderson's building was quite a departure for Farr and one of the earliest examples in Christchurch of Venetian Gothic styling with the use of constructional polychromy. Armson's public library (1875) was a more restrained example of Venetian Gothic architecture, popularised in England by Ruskin's influential writing and there were other simple instances of the style in Christchurch even during the '60s.<sup>49</sup> It seems more likely that Farr was following ideas from current building journals and adapting examples from secondary sources, than acting as a disciple of Ruskin. Perhaps it was Anderson who suggested the style. In 1881, Armson again outshone Farr by building an elaborate Venetian Gothic facade to the Cashel Street side of Anderson's property in what is known today as Bell's Arcade. Compared to Armson's assured, better preserved building Farr's design seems second-class today, yet the Lyttelton Times description and the photograph from 1900 show that it was highly regarded and for many years presented a handsome, sophisticated appearance.

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49. Andersen, p.387 shows a building in Hereford Street, dated 1866.

Farr was associated with W.R. Parker, a builder, in a business venture in 1880. A block of buildings, designed by Farr, was erected at the north-west corner of Gloucester and Manchester Streets for leasing as shops and offices.<sup>50</sup> Parker leased the section for a peppercorn rent the first year and for rental of a graded amount over the next thirty years with the requirement that he must erect a building to the value of at least £1,000 within the first two years and within five years, another worth at least £2,000. The buildings were to be substantially constructed of permanent materials and precise instructions were included in the transaction about the bonding of bricks with good Portland cement and the inclusion of good hoop iron.<sup>51</sup>

No early photograph or description of the building have been found to establish how this building looked but the upper storey appears to have been little altered. It is constructed of brick with intermediate bands of concrete to provide a decorative effect while complying with the required standards of strength. It is unlikely that Farr would design a street facade in 1880 without any entablature but this building no longer has one. Projecting vertical bands divide the two facades into bays which feature sash windows topped by fanlights. Paired windows separated by slim cast iron pillars are surmounted by a single half-circle window with radiating divisions. In the wall surface above this, concrete panels repeat the radiating pattern. This window motif marks the end of each bay and between, are windows where a shallow arch is given strong keystone emphasis. Paired corbels support the string course at the division of each bay and there is a complex rhythm of detailing effectively carried out in what was probably red brick and grey cement but is now a uniform pale yellow. This was different again from the Anderson building and reflects the greater

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50. L.T., 9th March, 1880, Public Notice.

51. Land Office Records. 91 D551. 19th April, 1880.

variety of styles which were being introduced into Christchurch architecture by 1880.

A tender for S.C. Farr and Son appeared in the Lyttelton Times 21st Sept. 1880, for 'a block of buildings in brick etc. at the corner of Manchester and Tuam Street for Mr T.H. Green'. This was another large three-storeyed block of shops where Farr experimented with a further scheme of design. The facade was rhythmically divided into bays as usual, two single windows to each of seven bays along Manchester Street and one in each of the six Tuam Street bays. The main fabric of the building is brick and the decorative detailing and facings are of plaster with lavish floral terracotta ornament. Most of the pierced parapet remains and a few of the original urns provide their crowning embellishment to the skyline. Perhaps under Everard's influence Farr used the terracotta detailing to give this building a new and stylish appearance.

From 1873 when the Fisher building was erected, until the three-storeyed block was built for Green in 1880, Farr advertised for tenders for over twenty commercial buildings. Those that have been described may be representative of what he built but there could will be others still standing which would demonstrate his abilities with a broader range of styles. He kept pace with contemporary attitudes on what constituted appropriate street architecture. When John Hall spoke disparagingly of the 'Melbournification of Christchurch'<sup>52</sup> he was referring to the system which develops in street architecture where the sides of buildings adjoin, ensuring that the facade is the most important feature. A building could not be appreciated as a whole and so while the facade was detailed, the sides were largely ignored and a row of handsome buildings was really one of false

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52. J. Hight and C.R. Straubel (eds.). A History of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1857-71. Vol.2, p.236.

fronts. This system was accepted throughout New Zealand, as in Melbourne, where hasty building during gold rush times had given the city an appearance akin to that of an American frontier town.

Farr's designs followed this convention. It was uneconomic to use high quality materials or to ornament the areas of a building which would not be seen but it made good business sense to attract the public with an eye-catching facade crowned by an imposing cornice and parapet. The Reece building of 1878 is a typical example of Farr's work in its fashionable styling and use of modern construction methods and materials.

Farr's versatility in styling and construction extended to all fields of architecture. Over the years he was called on to design a diverse range of structures. These included a malthouse and brewery for Messrs Brown and Company in 1864 and he designed another brewery in 1880 for the Standard Brewery Company. A very large two-storeyed brick building 240 ft x 36 feet was erected by Farr in 1879 for Mr Alfred Smith's Wincolmlee, brick and maltworks opposite the Heathcote Railway station. Farr described this in 1916 as 'the first brick building in New Zealand'<sup>53</sup> - obviously a mistake but he must have felt this building had a particular significance. He was also responsible for the building of a 70 ft high brick chimney in association with Montgomery and Company's steam mill in 1873 and in October 1878 advertised for tenders for 'a footbridge at Elmwood for R.H. Rhodes Esq.'.

With these varied commissions Farr made his contribution to Canterbury's progress. From his first days in Akaroa he had proved himself ready to tackle any task and he was similarly capable of dealing with any architectural problem.

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53. S.C. Farr, 'The Story of Samuel Charles Farr'.

Within the categories of public and commercial architecture he embraced a wider range of styles than elsewhere. He kept strictly to Gothic for schools, added classical styling for some churches and moved from simple cottage styles in housing to Gothic and Italianate designs. But he demonstrated that he was equally fluent in Romanesque, Renaissance, Palazzo, Venetian, Gothic or composite 'modern' Victorian styles with the halls, hotels, shops and offices he planned.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## SCHOOLS

The first schools in Canterbury were established by the Association (who organised lessons on the first four ships), and then from 1854 education became the responsibility of the Provincial Government. Through the 'fifties, only about one third of the children eligible to attend school did so. In 1863, a commission recommended that a Board of Education be formed and a system was established in 1864 where districts could form school committees to arrange for a local school to be built. Denominational schools outnumbered district ones until the Education Ordinance in 1871 abolished school fees and levied an annual education rate of £1 per householder and five shillings for each child between six and thirteen years who lived within a three mile radius of the school. From this time there was a considerable increase in attendance and in the building of district schools which soon dominated over denominational ones. Each district committee was responsible for organising the building of their school, but had to have plans approved by the Education Board before they were carried out.<sup>1</sup>

Initially, school rooms were often just a room in a private house and the first school room Farr built was of this type, for Fergusson at *Dalcroy House*. Apart from its furnishing there would have been little to distinguish such a room from any normal nineteenth-century living room.

In 1871, Farr was asked by the Heathcote Valley school committee to

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1. A.G. Butchers, Centennial History of Education in Canterbury, Christchurch, 1953. W.J. Gardner and Ralph Winterbourne, 'Education 1850-76', A History of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1957-71, Vol.2, pp.369-388.

plan a school and residence for the teacher, possibly through the influence of some of the Pavitt family who lived in the district. However it does not seem that Farr's plans were used.<sup>2</sup> About the same time he designed the school and master's residence for the Harewood Road committee, where again there were links to the Pavitt family. Thomas Pavitt was the school committee representative who presented Farr's plans for approval in September 1871. His request that the Board should consider enlarging the Harewood Road district because it had only thirty-two families compared to neighbouring Papanui's two hundred, suggests that some difficulty was being experienced in getting a school established.<sup>3</sup> However Farr's tender notice was inserted into the newspapers on 7th October and the school was erected toward the rear of the present school's site with the master's house close by the road. The committee had to raise one quarter of the buildings' cost which was £345 and an additional £20 towards books and apparatus.

An early photograph<sup>4</sup> shows a simple rectangular weatherboard structure with pitched shingle roof and ventilators in the finial trimmed gables. No porch is seen but there would probably have been a small lean-to structure at the obscured end or side. There were four pairs of windows, each with six small panes, along the side of the building allowing a good proportion of glass to the wall surface so that ample lighting was provided, but the positioning of the windows was high enough to prevent children seeing out. The school, consisting of just a single room about forty feet long, was supervised by two teachers, the master and his assistant. This was the simplest possible structure, with the finials on the gables the only element which were not strictly necessary and were the small obligatory

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2. Tender, The Press, 1st Aug. 1871. See above Chapter 2, note 22.

3. Report of Education Board Meeting, The Press, 4th Sept. 1871.  
Tender, The Press, 7th Oct. 1871.

4. At the present school there are photographs of the original building along with early committee minute books and two histories of the school and district.

details of ornament aimed to lift the building into the Victorian category of 'architecture'.

Throughout Christchurch and Canterbury many similar basic school buildings were erected during the 1860s and '70s. Solidly built, they provided large classrooms where perhaps eighty children would be accommodated. Ventilation was a prime concern and a variety of patent methods were used to provide a flow of air through the high-ceilinged buildings. Open fireplaces provided heating in most of the schools, warming the teacher more adequately than the children.

In November 1871, the Heathcote Valley school was the subject of further discussion by the Board of Education.<sup>5</sup> Mr Mountfort had advised the committee on plans for a school but the Board objected to the design because it provided cross lighting, saying 'According to the principles laid down by the National Council of Education and also the Council of Education in Victoria, cross lights should always be avoided'. That the Board was following the guidelines of English Educational authorities for school building is evidenced in a notice that was in The Press, 27th November 1871, for a competition for architects. The Board offered a twenty guinea premium for a set of drawings with details and specifications for a school room and master's house, '... the designs to accord with the general recommendations of Her Majesty's Committee of the Privy Council on Education on the subject of the erection of school buildings'.

In England, elementary education had largely been the preserve of churches.<sup>6</sup> Some grants were made by the Government in 1833 which then

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5. The Press, 21st Nov. 1871.

6. The organisation of schools, the methods of teaching and the planning of school buildings in nineteenth-century England are fully discussed by M. Seabourne, The English School, Its Architecture and Organisation 1370-1870, London, 1971, Chapter 10.



wished to have some control over how this money was used. A Committee of the Privy Council on Education was set up in 1839 with rights to inspect and make recommendations to schools the Government aided. Their suggestions were formulated into a set of 'Rules to be Observed in Planning and Fitting up Schools',<sup>7</sup> issued by the Education Department in 1863. When the Elementary Education Act was passed in 1870 these rules were used by the various School Boards as guides for the architects of the increasing number of elementary schools being built.

E.R. Robson who became architect for the London School Board in 1871, made a comprehensive study of school buildings through Europe and published his book School Architecture in 1874. He elaborated on the regulations and made suggestions which were closely followed in England and the colonies. Introducing the subject he said, 'The plan of the school building depends so much on the method of tuition that an acquaintance with the latter is of the first necessity to the school architect'.<sup>8</sup> An understanding of the way nineteenth-century school buildings in New Zealand were used is also necessary in a study of their designs.

The Privy Council's rules, which continued as a guide well through to the 1880s, were devised for the system of teaching where a master instructed a large class with the help of monitors or assistants - the mutual instruction method. From about mid-century, it was pupil teachers who began to assist the master but the large classroom where children sat at benches in rows was still favoured. With sixty to eighty children being taught by one experienced teacher aided by one pupil teacher, an oblong shaped classroom, ideally about eighteen feet wide, was considered best. Here children could be ranged three rows deep in groups according to ability.

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7. E.R. Robson, School Architecture, New York, 1972, (first published 1874). Appendix B.

8. Robson, p.3.

The system of teaching in Canterbury continued what was known in England and schools were designed to suit the system. The English regulations for buildings had proved satisfactory for many years so it was sensible to follow them where possible in matters of plan, lighting, the amount of space to allow per child, the minimum height of ceilings and of window sills and so on. Some of Robson's remarks about current opinions on sunlight show how attitudes have changed and explain why so many nineteenth-century schools have been considered since to be dismal and ill-planned. While accepting that sunlight was beneficial to young children, Robson felt that securing as much sun as possible was not good planning for a school because it produced uncomfortable glare and heat. He considered that '... the coolest steadiest and best light is that from the north and the principal aspect of the boys and girls school rooms should first be selected as near that quarter as may be practicable from the site'. (i.e. Light from the south in the Southern Hemisphere.) Robson did not agree with the people who strongly believed schools should have no windows on the south or west and thought, '... some sunny windows should always be provided', but only with '... the most absolute powers of control'. However he believed the siting of the playground was as important as the school rooms and here, 'Sun is ... a necessary of life'.<sup>9</sup>

Since the 1840s the style of English schools had become more ecclesiastical, reflecting Pugin's ideas that Gothic architecture best expressed the educational purpose of the building. The Ecclesiologists, whose principles for church and school building were influential in the Anglican settlement of Canterbury, advocated only the Gothic style. It would therefore have been quite remarkable if the first Canterbury schools to display an architectural character beyond mere expediency had not been

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9. Robson, p.167.

Gothic. Farr, who was given a generous share of school building work in the 1870s, retained a firm belief in Gothic as the style for educational building. To the smaller schools he added inexpensive Gothic motifs, rather as he did for church buildings where it was important to restrict costs. (See Chapter 5.) The bigger schools provided him with satisfying opportunities to create full schemes of Gothic detailing with which to dress his conventionally planned buildings.

When Farr was asked to design additions for the Springston school in 1874, economy and convenience were still his major considerations. A district school had been opened here in 1868 with twenty-five children.<sup>10</sup> The roll had increased until ninety-five children were taught in the 26 ft x 17 ft 6 ins school room by a single teacher. The room Farr added in November 1874 was placed beside the original school. Its dimensions were 20 ft 6 ins x 33 ft 6 ins and it was lit by four pairs of windows along the side, as at Harewood Road, and by a group of three windows at the northern gable end. A photograph dating from 1928<sup>11</sup> shows a tall central window flanked by two lower ones and above this a group of three smaller square windows, which may have been a later addition. Four triangular ventilators projected along each side of the roof and a bold but simple bargeboard decorated the gable. In 1886 a further classroom was added to the other side of the first school room, designed by Everard Farr, then the Board of Education architect, in the same style as his father's building.

The Harewood Road and Springston schools were typical examples of the small country schools built throughout Canterbury and New Zealand. However, after 1871 the Education districts in Christchurch were catering for higher and increasing roll numbers and much larger schools were required.

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10. The Centennial Book of Springston School, Christchurch, 1968.

11. *Ibid.*, p.21.

Proportionate costs were shared more broadly and a greater consideration was able to be given to the architectural style and appearance of these larger schools than was possible in smaller districts.

The situation where the Association had brought to Canterbury more teachers than were required in the early years of settlement had been reversed and there was an urgent need for more trained teachers. The Education Commission of 1863 had recommended the early establishment of a Normal School and Teachers' College. In 1871, J.P. Restell, the Inspector of Schools, prepared a report outlining the desirability of establishing a Normal School for training teachers, persuading the Board of Education to approach the Provincial Government for a grant to assist the scheme. With the backing of £3,000 voted by the Government, the Board decided to go ahead in 1873, purchasing a section in Cranmer Square and arranging a competition which they considered would provide them with the best plans. Invitations for competitive designs to be entered anonymously under a 'cypher or motto' were placed in the newspaper, offering £50 and £25 to the first two prizewinners.<sup>12</sup>

The Board examined twelve designs at a meeting on 2nd June, announcing on 17th June that they had selected the design of 'Speratum' as winner, with that by 'Scholastic' receiving second prize. They had had to advertise throughout the week 3rd to 9th June for the author of the design signed 'Speratum' (Hopeful) to forward his name and address to the Board (as the competitors has been requested to do in a sealed envelope along with their entry), but were now able to announce S.C. Farr as the winning architect

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12. The Press, 18th April, 1873.

and R.A. Lawson of Dunedin, second.<sup>13</sup>

[22,23) The Lyttelton Times reporter who inspected the two winning sets of plans, wrote on 18th June that the Board's decision between first and second was 'universally approved' and that 'Mr Farr's design was such as to satisfy any reasonable mind'.

Farr had sought to satisfy the Board of Education with a design which had striking architectural merit while embodying all the required features of plan and convenience. The concept of Normal Schools, where trainee teachers observed and practised under experienced qualified teachers carrying out 'normal' classroom activities was a relatively new one. Otago's Normal School, the first in New Zealand and Canterbury's, were begun at about the same time and precise ideas about how they should be planned were lacking. The Board of Education asked for an ordinary model school containing separate facilities for boys and girls totalling about 1,000 pupils, plus rooms for teachers, for their own offices and a book depot.

Farr chose to define the corner of the site with a two-storeyed L shaped building in which a wing 244 feet long for the boys faced the Square on Kilmore Street and the girls' school wing 145 feet long, had its frontage on Montreal Street. He provided two classrooms 60 feet by 25 feet, separated by three smaller teachers' rooms on each floor of the boys' school and similar accommodation for the girls except that their major classrooms were just 40 feet by 25 feet. Each wing had its own central entrance and

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13. Farr was preoccupied with other matters at this time. On 7th and 9th June he was in a Lyttelton Court answering charges of assaulting and insulting W.H. Pilliet, who in turn was being charged with assault and being drunk and disorderly. The cases against Farr were dismissed but Pilliet had to pay £5 costs for assaulting Farr. Canterbury Times, 14th June, 1873, p.3.

broad stairway. A corridor ran the whole length of the building at the rear, allowing each room to be independent but linked. At the corner where the wings met the Education Board offices and Book Depot were sited and provided with a separate entrance. Doors were placed in the main corridor here so that each of the three departments could be kept quite separate when desired.

The decision to position all the rooms with access to a continuous rear corridor may have been inspired by Sir Alfred Waterhouse's design for the Town Hall at Manchester. Highly praised for the convenience of its design, this building was illustrated in The Builder in 1868.<sup>14</sup> Nearer at hand, the oldest portion of the Provincial Government building with two wings around a corner site and long connecting corridors, may have suggested a plan for the Normal School to Farr.

For heating, each room was provided with a fire place, one at each end of the large classrooms. As usual, Farr paid careful attention to the question of ventilation and placed air ducts in the walls of all rooms to ensure a free flow of air, finally emitted through vents in turrets along the roof. To allow for greater flexibility in the school rooms' use he planned moveable partitions for the large rooms on the upper floor so that these could be subdivided if necessary.

The ceiling height of 14 feet, the window sill height four feet from the floor and the provision of a timber panelled dado to this height all complied with the Privy Council's rules. The school rooms were not 'cross-lit' but were provided with a 'cool steady' light from the south on the Kilmore Street wing. The girls' wing on Montreal Street, lit by a west light, if not perfect was better than a light from the north (and it was just for

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14. The Builder, Vol.XXVI (1868) pp.318-319.

the girls). The sheltering wings of the school semi-enclosed a playground ideally sited for the sun.

In every way Farr's planning met with the Board's approval and was highly praised in the Lyttelton Times for its 'excellent method'. Similarly the Gothic style and architectural detailing of the proposed school found favour, the Lyttelton Times writer concluding that when erected it would be 'an ornament and a credit to the city'. Some of the appeal of Farr's design must have been this aspect, that it would be an imposing gracious addition to the city scene. Farr's interpretation of Gothic forms was distinctive and assured, different from the examples already in Christchurch but blending with them.

By mid-1873 when the Normal School competition was held, the most important educational building in Christchurch was Fitzgerald's Big School at Christ's College. Dating from 1863, it featured a steep dominating roof, and rough stone buttressed walls with lancet windows. Important examples of stone Gothic buildings were Mountfort's Provincial Government building 1865, and the Museum 1870, where dark grey walls were enlivened by scholarly detailing in lighter stone. There were also the churches, including the Durham Street Methodist church, which had given Farr valuable experience working in the Gothic idiom.

He probably envisaged the Normal School as a combination of two traditions, the elementary school and the university. With expanding needs, the two long wings could later have been complemented by two further wings to complete the quadrangle form customary in a university complex. A very old Gothic school he may have known in Hertfordshire was one dating from 1541 at Berkhamsted, less than 30 miles from Baldock. Here a large single-storeyed room is defined by a succession of arched windows between buttresses,

with two-storeyed gabled sections projecting at each end.<sup>15</sup> A distinct resemblance exists between this building and the Normal School in the rhythm of its wall plane, the shape of the roof, and the decorative ventilating turrets and chimneys.

Farr would also have been aware of the recently built schools in England through the designs illustrated and discussed in architectural journals,<sup>16</sup> but the school he designed relates in style most of all to that of the rugged collegiate buildings from the 1840s by Pugin, Butterfield, and Carpenter. D. Shepard points out the Normal School's similarities to Butterfield's Parsonage at Coalpitheath, (1844-5)<sup>17</sup> while links can also be seen to his St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, (1844-73) and to Pugin's Ratcliffe College (1843-7). In Victorian architecture the octagonal form was often used for towers and spires and Farr may have interpreted the corner book depot as the lowered stage of a tower. He might also have looked at medieval Chapter Houses or the octagonal-shaped Bodleian Library at Oxford. The Natural History Museum, designed by Deane and Woodward in Oxford between 1855 and 1860, featured a separate laboratories pavillion where the exterior eight sided shape was modified by the addition of four corner towers. (The model for the pavillion was the abbot's kitchen at Glastonbury Abbey.) This recent successful incorporation of an octagonal form into a Gothic educational complex could have been the source of Farr's inventive combination. However, the High Victorian eclecticism which became popular in England in the 1860s and 1870s is absent from the Normal School's plainer Gothic mode.

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15. Seabourne, plate 18.

16. Seabourne, Appendix 2 lists the elementary schools illustrated in The Builder 1843-70. Appendix 3 lists the middle class schools.

17. D. Shepard et al. The Normal School, Christchurch, 1981, p.6.



Farr combined Gothic forms in a manner which strongly reflects the influence of Pugin. It is unlikely that he would consciously set out to design according to the principles of Gothic architecture established by the great Roman Catholic architect, but Pugin's ideas were a pervasive influence in Victorian architectural concepts. The distinct purpose of each part of the Normal School is expressed in the plan and the facade. The two 'school' wings are composed of classrooms where a repeated pattern of window groups alternate with buttresses. The teachers' rooms have a harmonising but distinct fenestration in the projecting gabled sections. The end bays on Kilmore Street and the central one on Montreal Street were given greater emphasis by the further projection of the double-storeyed bay windows and the elaborate wheel form of the ventilator in the gable.

At the intersection of the wings the interesting grouping of the octagonal Book Depot and the slender 60 feet high tower behind it formed an effective focal point and conjunction while delineating the Education Board rooms and their distinct entrance. Each doorway clearly asserted its presence though the Board's entrance (enclosed under a separate gable and extensively decorated) was given stronger emphasis. Chimneys and ventilator turrets along the apex of the roof contributed to the rhythm of the total design adding further decorative detail and interest to the building's silhouette while frankly expressing their functional purpose. Although the L shaped plan of the building was fairly rigid, a sense of regularity was avoided by the varied manner in which the wall plane was enlivened and an overall sense of 'picturesque utility' was achieved. Honesty in plan and construction, a Puginian requisite, was continued in the use of irregularly cut blocks of rugged stone, (the usual practice in Christchurch buildings like the Durham Street Church and the Museum).

The success of a Victorian building lay not only in the handling of

space but also in the use of ornament and Farr's competence in both these spheres is evident at the Normal School. Copy books and the various building journals provided abundant sources for the ornament applied to the building. The oriel window<sup>18</sup> on the eastern end provided a decorative feature which was not repeated at the north end, probably because the possibility of extending the Montreal Street wing was always envisaged. (The original plans for the Normal School did not include the oriel window which must have been added when the drawings were revised.) Farr was fortunate in having the services of master stone mason William Brassington who would have been given a certain freedom in interpreting the finer details. A similar high level of craftsmanship is seen in the finish and design of the iron work like finials, cresting, hinges and belts. The use of good quality local stones was planned to provide the required contrast between dark rough irregular blocks and lighter dressings and ornaments.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the enthusiastic reception Farr's plan received when his design was first chosen and viewed by the public, the building was to be the subject of criticism even before it was finished. It was the end of July 1873 before specifications were completed, a further half acre of land purchased on Cranmer Square, and the Board received final approval from the Provincial Government (and promise of a £10,000 grant) to go ahead and call for tenders.<sup>20</sup> Estimates of cost by the three tenderers proved too high and it was decided to begin with just the Kilmore Street wing. D. Reece's amended tender for £10,280 was accepted and the foundation stone was laid at a splendid ceremony on Anniversary Day, 16th December 1873, by the Governor, Sir James Fergusson.<sup>21</sup>

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18. The oriel window was a popular Victoria motif. Mountfort used one to enliven the eastern facade of the Government Buildings in 1865.

19. Halswell stone with Heathcote Valley dressings were planned. Later the Board decided to use the more expensive Oamaru stone which was more easily worked and provided greater contrast for the dressings.

20. Tender, *The Press*, 31st July, 1873, amended 6th Sept. 1873.

21. *The Press*, 11th Dec. 1873, p.2. Description of the trowel made for the ceremony. 17th Dec. 1873. Account of the ceremony and editorial comment on the significance of the occasion.

In January 1875, a letter was sent to England to arrange for the appointment of a Principal of the school. Figures for the dimensions of the rooms were included and a photograph of the building, 'fast approaching completion'.<sup>22</sup> Already, the Board of Education had decided they should discontinue the maintenance of a book depot and the purpose of Farr's octagon room was lost. There was serious criticism of the cost, estimated now to total £16,000 for completion of the two wings. At the time the Board of Education was disbanded as an economy measure and the Hon. A.C. Knight was appointed Minister of Education instead. Thomas Cane, Government Architect was in charge of all school buildings, though those begun under individual architects were completed by them. In May 1875, Knight suggested that such an expensive building would be better used as a university college and library, but his idea was firmly discounted in a letter to the Lyttelton Times by Reverend Habens who said, 'It seems folly to devote a structure exactly adapted for school purposes to uses for which it is not fit and then to incur costs of putting up new schools elsewhere'.<sup>23</sup> Habens elaborated on how the building had been designed to suit accepted school requirements and clarified its proposed role in the training of teachers. At this date therefore its plan was still regarded as ideal though there were a few problems envisaged by the Inspector of Schools at the end of 1875 with regard to ventilation, heating, and the convenience of doorways.<sup>24</sup>

The opening of the school was not attended by great ceremony or lengthy descriptive accounts in the newspapers. It had a rather haphazard beginning. In November 1875, some pupils from the overcrowded school room at the Durham Street Methodist church which had been rented by the Board as temporary accommodation, were moved in to the ground floor rooms on Kilmore

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22. Provincial Government Records, Canterbury Museum Archives. Letter from Rolleston to Ottywell, 15th Jan. 1875.

23. L.T., 18th May, 1875.

24. Report of Minister of Education. Canterbury Gazette of the Province of Canterbury, New Zealand, 1876, Canterbury Museum Archives.

Street before the building was completed. Other children joined them in February 1876, though it was not until April 1876 that the school officially opened.<sup>25</sup> Doubts over the status of the school had been raised with the replacement of the Board of Education by a Minister, and the passing of the Bill to abolish the provinces in August 1875. All these uncertainties meant that the school was not completed in the same spirit of civic pride and optimism with which it was begun.

The octagon room, now used for the meetings of the reinstated Board of Education, was not adequately lit by the lantern and the decorative windows high in the gables. The rose pattern ornament which appears on each section of the octagon<sup>26</sup> was replaced on two sides by further windows and a triple lancet window was inserted at the lowest level facing west. Changing ideas on methods of teaching children meant that in later years the large school rooms were no longer suitable though in 1878-9 Thos. Cane's additions followed Farr's plan and harmonised with his styling. Charles Howard, the Principal who began the Training Department in 1877, reported at the end of the year that a lecture hall for students was needed and expressed dissatisfaction over the ventilation system which had seemed so praiseworthy when planned in 1873.<sup>27</sup>

The solidity of the school's construction prevented it being readily adapted to suit twentieth-century teaching purposes. Although construction

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25. Brief references to the opening appeared in The Globe, 1st April 1876, p.2 and the Weekly Press, 8th April 1876, p.11.

26. The rose design was slightly modified from Farr's original drawings. Compare Farr's elevation, and the photograph of the building under construction in 1874, Shepard, p.8. This photograph may have been the one sent to England in Jan. 1875 with Rolleston's letter.

27. Appendix to Journals of the House of Representatives, 1878. Report on the Normal School. H.l.p.958.

methods were rudimentary by today's standards the building possessed great strength through its bulk and weight. Totara was used for the heavy roof trusses which simply rest on supportive pillars, remaining stable through weight and careful fitting without being tied in. Massive unreinforced concrete foundations rest on peat and any settling which has occurred over the years has been even.<sup>28</sup> Earthquakes in 1881 and 1888 did some damage to chimneys and towers but fortunately no major shock occurred to test the building's minimal tensile strength.<sup>29</sup> It was not until this century that it was deemed advisable to remove the towers and ventilator turrets which has lessened the original effectiveness of the school's design.

The school began to acquire a reputation for being, 'gloomy, dark and ill ventilated ... a monument to conservatism and custom'.<sup>30</sup> Gradually the myth developed that the school had been designed by an architect in England. In the 1930s when open classrooms were designed in an almost fanatical endeavour to provide sunshine and fresh air for pupils, it was incomprehensible that a school could have been deliberately sited to avoid too much sun penetration. In 1940, Paul Pascoe wrote that the Normal School 'was planned to face south by an English architect who did not realise he was depriving its occupants of the sun'. He referred to schools of the present, 'often built of wood, which besides being economical has the advantage of the impermanence necessary where requirements are constantly changing'.<sup>31</sup>

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28. Information about the building's structure was provided by Mr Sheppard, of Sheppard and Rout, architects at present working at the Normal School.

29. The Press, 6th Dec. 1881, p.2 and 3rd Sept. 1888, p.5.

30. Normal School Diamond Jubilee 1874-1934, Christchurch, 1934. W.C. Colee refers to the date on the foundation stone and the date 1874 on the tower over the entrance which he concludes was to mark the building's completion, hence the Jubilee celebrations in 1934. He also describes difficulties over the foundations which caused the octagon to be built lower than the architect intended. There has been nothing found in newspapers to suggest this occurred, and Farr's original elevation agreed with the design of the octagon as built.

31. P. Pascoe, 'Public Buildings', Making New Zealand, Pictorial Survey of a Century, Wellington, 1940, Vol.2, No.21, p.15.

In 1873, when the Normal School was planned, the permanence of a prestigious building was desired. The Board of Education believed their model school would be appropriate in the foreseeable future and there was no thought that requirements might change. Although Farr's plan was later seen as 'a monument to conservatism and custom', it was for these virtues that it was appreciated and partly because of them his design won from the eleven others submitted.<sup>32</sup> The skilled nineteenth-century craftsman who executed each precisely planned detail, the Board of Education who had the foresight to propose erection of the school and the taste to choose Farr's design, are commemorated along with Farr in this building which continues as a monument to colonial ideas of education.

In 1970, when the final occupants moved from the building, the school seemed doomed. A decade of uncertainty followed the Ministry of Works' declaration in 1971 that the building was, '... so structurally unsound that no way could be seen to make it safe for future use'.<sup>33</sup> The final solution for the building was devised by Mr C. Berryman, who with the architectural firm of Sheppard and Rout have succeeded in making the building conform to current structural standards. The opening up of the interior sides to allow sun penetration into imaginatively designed apartments and offices has provided a viable new purpose for the building, while the retention and restoration of the street facades without alteration has enabled the character of Farr's most important building to survive.

The Normal School is the only one of the large schools built by district school committees in Christchurch during the 1870s which remains.

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32. In 1916, Farr proudly recalled his win and said, 'My plans were preferred to those of seventeen competitors who sent in from Australia and New Zealand'. S.C. Farr, 'The Story of Samuel Charles Farr', Farr Family papers.

33. Sheppard, pp11-12 summarises events and decisions affecting the Normal School between 1952 and 1980.

Sydenham School, also begun in 1873 had upwards of 1,000 pupils and because of its sunless rooms also had the reputation of being designed in England. Armson designed a large brick High Victorian Gothic school in Lyttelton which must have had a similarly dull interior where children's attention would be kept on their work.<sup>34</sup>

The East Christchurch District Committee approached the Board of Education with plans for two new schools in November 1873, one designed by Mountfort to accommodate 1,000 children at Gloucester Street, estimated to cost £5,800 and another by Farr for 300 children at a cost of £915 in Avonside.<sup>35</sup> The Gloucester Street School was to be the main one for the district and though it eventually cost twice the estimated amount it provided similar but cheaper accommodation than the Normal School. The dimensions of the classrooms in the two-storeyed structure were comparable but it was constructed of timber with stone buttresses and in style was reminiscent of traditional Tudor buildings.

The school was praised for its plan just before it was opened by the Governor in November, 1875<sup>36</sup> (when pupils were first moving in to the Normal School). However the writer was less complimentary about the boarding which clad the exterior walls, thinking it gave the building, 'a peculiar appearance after the style of corrugated iron' and he considered the windows on the ground floor 'not so large as might be desired'. Arranged in two parallel wings for girls and boys with a bell tower between, many likenesses can be seen between the plan of this school and its contemporaries. Mountfort, like Armson, was less conservative than Farr in his choice of style.

34. The Weekly Press, 23rd Jan. 1875, p.16. Description of the newly completed Lyttelton Borough School.

35. The Press, 25th Nov. 1873.

36. L.T., 8th Nov. 1875, p.2, description of the school. 18th Nov. p.3, account of the opening ceremony.

Farr designed two schools for the East Christchurch District committee, one at Bingsland (also called Avonside and later, Richmond) on Stanmore Road and another on Barbadoes Street near the South Town Belt (Fitzgerald Avenue).<sup>37</sup> The Bingsland School was designed especially for younger children and the committee's intention to use the same plans for the Barbadoes Street School was opposed by the Board of Education. Great urgency was expressed over getting the Bingsland School underway because a large tent was being used to accommodate pupils early in 1874; and the building was opened with a tea meeting and entertainment on 25th September. Furniture which Farr designed for this school was recommended by the school inspector as model examples.

The Barbadoes Street plan was eventually sanctioned by the Board but Farr had problems here with the drainage. At a meeting in December 1874, a defect was reported in the building being twelve inches lower than intended. Mr Farr had stated that this defect was, 'owing to the clerk of works having misunderstood him'.<sup>38</sup> The problems were overcome after much work on the grounds and the mistake bred no ill feelings toward Farr in the district where he later served as a member of the school committee until 1890.

The two schools, designed for about 200 children under eight years old may have been identical.<sup>39</sup> A rectangular wooden building with a steeply pitched roof, Bingsland School contained two adjoining classrooms separated by a moveable partition which could be folded back to provide a single space

37. Tenders, The Press, end Jan. 1874 for Bingsland School, 8th Jan. 1874 for Barbadoes Street School, sometimes referred to as the South Town Belt School.

38. The Press, 4th Dec. 1874, East Christchurch School Committee Meeting.

39. Opened on 25th Sept. 1874, the Bingsland School had a roll of 290 children by 4th Dec. 1874. An illustration of Farr's building is in G. Walshe, Richmond: A Regional History, Christchurch, 1973, p.21.



63 feet by 30 feet, with a gallery at one end. At the centre of each side a gable broke the roof line and two porches projected at the end. The main entrance porch at the front of the building was lit by a double lancet window and a wheel window was in the main wall above. Triple and single lancet windows were along the front and sides of the building and a small neat bell turret surmounted the roof. Here Farr provided an economically planned school building in simple Gothic dress to express its educational purpose.

Bingsland School was described briefly in The Press, 4th February 1874, p.3 under the heading 'New Schools' when two other schools Farr had designed were also discussed. He must have been planning all of these buildings, as well as the Normal School, at about the same time.

The Durham Street Methodist Church members required a large Sabbath School building to adjoin and harmonise with their church.<sup>40</sup> The stone building Farr designed extends at right angles from the church and was entered through two entrance porches from the courtyard (now occupied by the Aldersgate addition). Its materials, style and ornament blended with the existing building to provide a school room 36 feet by 68 feet, with a height from floor to ceiling of twenty-two feet six inches.

The Press reporter, as was usual, discussed the ventilating system which was to be provided at this and the other two schools. At Durham Street there were to be slide ventilators below each window and outlets in the roof. In the many descriptions in the newspapers of buildings planned for Christchurch through the first three or four decades, no mention was made of a building's suitability for penetration of the sun. Ventilation remained

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40. Tender, The Press, 27th Dec. 1873.

the major criteria of a plan's merits. Perhaps because Victorian men, when in large public places felt constricted by their stiff high collars, and their women were similarly afflicted by the tight lacing of their undergarments, there was a preoccupation over the need for adequate fresh air which is not felt to the same degree today.

In October 1873, the recently formed West Christchurch district school committee advertised a competition for designs for additional school buildings on the Lincoln Road site of what had been the Christchurch Academy and then the Christchurch High School formed in 1858 for the Presbyterian Church by Reverend Charles Fraser. A ground plan was provided and a premium of £21 was offered. Farr's design was accepted, Messrs England Brothers won the contract and building commenced in February 1874.

In a lengthy report in the Lyttelton Times on 18th February 1974, (24) the school is described as 'very attractive and commodious in the Gothic style of architecture'. Single-storeyed in wood with a slate roof, the building had a large central room 121 feet by 25 feet with a moveable partition provided for flexible division. Two flanking wings accommodated further classrooms which had individual entrances and were linked by a broad verandah rather than the enclosed corridor of the Normal School. The main facade and ends of the principle block featured decorated gables in which a triple window (like the one at Springston School), with a wheel-shaped ventilator above, provided a major accent.

The most dramatic feature of the school was its central entrance tower which projected from the main wing. The eccentricity of this design rising through variously decorated stages to its final 88 feet apex, is akin to the 'rogue' architecture of Samuel Teulon at, for example Bestwood Lodge,

1862-4.<sup>41</sup> The tower gave access to the large school room through a vestibule 16 feet square. Above this a slightly narrower room designed for the school committee's meetings was given additional lighting from two oriel windows set at the front angles of the tower in a manner reminiscent of the Scottish baronial style. The next section of the tower contained a clock in its central face, and was surmounted by a parapet and four turrets, before the crowning elaboration of the spire.

Throughout the school Gothic detailing was once more meticulously interpreted in timber and complementary ventilation turrets enlivened the roof's silhouette with a final decorative flourish. Perhaps it was his confidence-boosting success in the Normal School competition which inspired Farr to embellish his relatively pedestrian school design with lively detailing and the capricious tower.

Farr's involvement in school planning was only during the brief period when school building was the responsibility of the individual districts. Among the bigger districts in Christchurch where large schools were needed, a certain rivalry developed, encouraging distinctive designs to be sought from esteemed architects. The schools Farr designed were suited to each district's needs and in their diversity provide interesting representative examples of the architecture of education as it was practised in early Canterbury.

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41. Bestwood Lodge, illustrated in Dixon and Muthesius, Victorian Architecture, London, 1978, p.42.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## CHURCHES

Pugin believed that only architects of true Christian faith should be employed to design churches. He considered church commissions the ultimate task for a Christian architect who should best use his talent in buildings which glorified God.<sup>1</sup> These ideas of Pugin's were widely shared in the nineteenth century and Samuel Farr would have been in full agreement. However, his attitudes to church architecture were tempered by his own religious convictions. Although Pugin was a Roman Catholic, the Anglicans of Victorian England accepted his belief that Gothic was the only true Christian architecture. Dissenters like Farr did not develop the same fervour for Gothic as the 'correct' style and were not constrained by principles to choose the one form of architecture for their churches.

Although baptised in the Anglican church at Baldock, Farr became associated with the local Independent (or Congregational) church when his father became a member in 1831, and he became a full member himself in 1849, just prior to leaving for New Zealand. With only a small protestant group in Akaroa, all joined in the formation of an Anglican church, Farr and his wife being prominent among the supporters. When enough people had settled to allow the formation of a Presbyterian group, Farr became involved in the scheme to establish a church, though he does not seem to have become a member. On the family's arrival in Christchurch they joined the newly formed group of Independents, remaining with the Trinity Congregational Church until 1878 when a move was made to St. Paul's Presbyterian Church.

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1. P. Stanton, Pugin, London, 1971.

Farr and his wife felt most in sympathy with Nonconformist doctrines, both having a deep commitment to the work of their church. To a Nonconformist the actual church building did not hold the same significance it had for a Roman Catholic or an Anglican.

The Church of England embraced a broad range of beliefs between the Evangelical and the High Church wings. It underwent a revival in the nineteenth century which was begun defensively after the 1828 Repeal of the Corporation and Test Act lifted restrictions from Dissenters. The return of the Gothic style of architecture for church building, initiated by Pugin's championing of it as the true Christian and National style, was zealously pursued as a regenerative measure. The High Church, with the Ecclesiologists as its ardent advisers on sacramental aesthetics,<sup>2</sup> had a pervasive influence on New Zealand church building through Bishop Selwyn. In Christchurch, Mountfort expressed the Ecclesiologists' principles in 'correct' Gothic churches designed to serve the needs of the liturgy, though modifications were necessary for colonial materials and finances.

Whereas Anglican doctrines emphasised the sacraments with ceremony and ritual in an atmosphere of mysticism and spirituality, the Nonconformist groups emphasised preaching from the bible, encouraging a spirit of brotherhood and fellowship among members within an environment where simple reverence and devotion dominated. Since the seventeenth century all branches of the Church in England had moved to baroque or classical styles of

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2. For general information about the developments in the Church of England through the nineteenth century and the role of the ecclesiologists in reviving Gothic church architecture, see B. Clarke, Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century, A Study of the Gothic Revival in England, Great Britain, 1969, (first published 1938) and J.F. White, The Cambridge Movement, The Ecclesiologists and the Gothic Revival, Cambridge, 1962.

architecture and church plans were adjusted by the Protestants to provide buildings more suited for preaching.

The Dissenters, with no tradition of their own, had largely followed fashion, but did not favour the reintroduction of Gothic plans or styles because it was less suited to their form of service. They saw no relevancy in any specific style and made functional requirements their prime consideration in building. Nonconformists required a preaching hall where the congregation could all see and hear clearly. No symbolism in form or plan was considered necessary and the term 'meeting house' employed by many Nonconformist groups conveys their different attitude toward the form and fabric of their place of worship.

Nonconformists disapproved of the Anglican focus on the chancel as theatrical and pretentious, and believed a sumptuous highly decorated interior was distracting for worshippers. On the other hand, reforming Anglicans were critical of the Nonconformists' centralised preaching halls for their lack of symbolism and atmosphere, and considered the inclusion of galleries made such buildings more like theatres. Many Nonconformists were strongly anti-Gothic because of the style's long association with the Roman Catholic church and definite gestures of independence were made by choosing other architectural styles. One example is Alexander Thompson's Caledonian Road Free Church in Glasgow, 1856-7, which can be seen as a deliberate anti-Gothic and anti-ecclesiological statement. Yet despite these opposing attitudes Gothic architecture did become widely accepted by most denominations during the nineteenth century, as the Christian style.

In New Zealand, the first churches were usually quite rudimentary, of a simple rectangular plan and possibly having lancet windows to distinguish

them from other buildings. Though the first North Island churches by Selwyn and Thatcher developed an attractive distinctive timber interpretation of early Gothic forms, dozens of small church buildings throughout New Zealand were much more basic. Denominational rivalry was not often seen among the early colonists who shared available facilities amicably, though each group built its own church as soon as possible. It was usually not until the later decades of the century that the various denominations expressed their individuality more positively in larger permanent material buildings, following the precedents of style established by the parent groups in England.

Farr's design for St. Peter's Church, Akaroa, completed in October 1852, was a rudimentary one for a small group of protestant worshippers who simply wished to have their own church. They were the first group in Canterbury to organise the erection of a specifically designed place of worship and their prime requirement was a sturdy seemly building rather than correct symbolically styled architecture. So this was a task for Samuel Farr, the builder rather than Samuel Farr, the architect.

Soon after joining the Congregational group in Christchurch in 1862, he was asked to prepare plans for a church building to be erected on their newly acquired site at the corner of Worcester and Manchester Streets. Although this was still a relatively modest design more architectural skill was necessary. The estimated cost of £640 proved too daunting for the small group who, while firmly approving Farr's work, deferred the erection of a church until after the arrival of their minister William Habens in December, 1863.<sup>3</sup> However, before the Congregational Chapel was begun Farr was at work

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3. R. Keey, To Him Be The Glory. The Story of the Trinity Congregational Church, Christchurch, 1974, p.16 and High Street Christchurch Trust Minutes 1862-1890, Methodist Church Archives, Hereford Street, Christchurch.

on two other churches.

The announcement requesting designs for a new Wesleyan Church was advertised in The Press on the 20th April 1863. It was specified that the building should be in either brick or stone and that competing architects should provide two elevations, two sections, a ground plan and a roof plan with, 'specifications of a general nature and approximate estimate of the cost'. The building was required to accommodate 800 people with provision for the later addition of galleries at a total cost of no more than £4,500.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1863, Farr was involved with just two buildings. The Mechanics' Institute and a house, so he was relatively free to lavish careful attention on the preparation of a plan for this competition. There is no record of what form his plan took but it must have been a striking well-designed one to acquire second place in a competition which had attracted an entry from Australia. The first requests for tenders for the church designed by the Melbourne firm of Crouch and Wilson was signed C.W. Turner, then time was extended for receiving tenders in notices signed by Farr early in November 1863, indicating his role as supervising architect.

In December the estimated costs proved higher than expected and Farr was asked to reduce the ornamental parts of the building. When this could not adequately reduce the estimates, he prepared specifications and estimates for the church to be built in timber. The committee preferred the idea of a permanent material building and at a meeting on the 26th December 1863, Farr was asked to prepare further plans for a stone church and schools. However, on 5th January 1864, he was able to tell the committee that he had

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4. W.T. Blight, A House Not Made with Hands, A History of the Durham Street Methodist Church, Christchurch, 1964.



modified the Crouch and Wilson plan, allowing Mr McCosker the contractor to tender a price of £7,200, which was accepted.<sup>5</sup>

So though the church was based on Crouch and Wilson's design, Farr did a lot of work on it before building commenced. The facade, basically symmetrical in plan, was to have been made asymmetrical by a spire on the south corner. One economy measure was the omitting of the spire though strengthening buttresses were placed at the angles of this corner tower as it was probably intended to complete the spire when finances permitted. Also omitted was the organ chamber to have been in a recess at the rear of the church and no doubt a considerable amount of ornament. However the finished church presents a fine appearance with skilfully worked stone details and embellishments. The sturdiness of the broad front suggests Romanesque sources but motifs are Gothic including simple lancet windows combined with larger traceried ones as a central focus on the main facade and between the buttresses along the sides.

The projecting hood-mould over the central window was completed with carved portrait heads of Methodist personalities, Wesley and Buller. Soon after the opening ceremony the faces were disfigured, requiring some skilfull reconstruction by the stone mason who converted the heads into clusters of oak leaves and grapes.<sup>6</sup>

The interior is well suited to Wesleyan service requirements with its broad space where all can clearly see and hear the preacher. Despite the rich decorative effect of the ceiling with its dark timber lining and intricate braces, the interior is bright and well lit. Work continued on

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5. Methodist Trust Minutes.

6. Rev. M.A. Rugby-Pratt, 'A sketch of the Durham Street Methodist Church, Christchurch', Methodist Church Archives, Hereford Street, Christchurch.

the church through all of 1864 with completion some time after the opening service was held on 25th December that year. The proposed gallery was added in 1869, probably under Farr's direction.<sup>7</sup>

Not long after the Durham Street Church was begun Farr received a commission to design a church for the Presbyterian congregation at Lyttelton and he put the knowledge he had gained of stone Gothic detailing (25) to good use.<sup>8</sup> The foundation stone of St. John's Church, Lyttelton was laid on 1st June 1864, and on 1st January 1865, it was opened for worship. With no feeling of denominational rivalry in Lyttelton to influence the Presbyterians against the Gothic style, they were pleased with the plan Farr produced.

The small, substantially built stone church is rectangular in plan with a porch projecting from the centre of the facade. This rises into a square tower, higher than the apex of the steeply pitched roof, and culminates in a broach spire. At the rear of the church a lower projecting room contains the vestry. Exterior details can be seen as a simplified version of those at Durham Street. Diamond-paned windows along the sides alternate with stepped buttresses which are faced with a light coloured sandstone in contrast to the dark stone of the walls. Dressed stonework around the windows and doorways is also comparable, and the buttresses angled at each corner though a common Victorian motif, are an important feature at the Durham Street church.

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7. The tender in Lyttelton Times, 3rd July 1869, was signed 'C.B. Taylor, Secretary of Committee for the Durham Street Church'. Though Farr was Manager of the Fancy Bazaar at this time he was probably called in to supervise the erection of the galleries for which Crouch and Wilson had prepared plans.
  8. Tender, L.T., 4th Mar. 1864. Centenary of St. John's Presbyterian Church, Lyttelton 1864-1964, Christchurch, 1964.

A timber-panelled dado lines the interior below the level of the windows with plastered walls above marked into blocks to imitate stone. The ceiling, following the roof's shape, is diagonally boarded in timber with heavy arched braces resting on stone corbels. High in the interior wall between porch and church is a broad arched opening. Its form is repeated in a lower opening behind the central pulpit, but this has been covered by a curtain for many years.<sup>9</sup> These rather curious features were probably included to increase the amount of light admitted. Access is gained from the porch into the body of the church through a pair of round-arched doors, above which decorative ventilators (now closed) were placed. Ventilation was further assisted by louvred vents in triangular shaped projections along the roof and circular metal panels below each window, the lower panes of which can be opened.

Both the Durham Street Methodist Church and St. John's Presbyterian Church in Lyttelton continue as places of worship for their congregations, but the other church building Farr began in 1864 has long been superceded. Equally substantially built in stone, the Congregational Chapel was intended to be used as a hall and school room once the group had become sufficiently large and established to support the building of a worthier church.<sup>10</sup> Under the leadership of Reverend Habens the Congregationalists revived their intention to build. Farr's earlier plans were discarded in favour of a stock plan Habens had brought with him, but this had to be modified and elaborated, a task with Farr undertook.<sup>11</sup>

Because there were plans to build a church in the future, Farr's building was placed at the south end of the site facing Manchester Street.

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9. Ibid., illustration, p.5. The interior wall of the church behind the pulpit is further altered today.

10. Keey, illustration, facing p.33.

11. Tender, The Press, 23 June 1864.

Rectangular in plan and costing £1,260, the building was in high quality stone with a slate roof. Two small porches projected from each side giving access from the street and a vestry was added along the south wall, leaving a spacious area 60 ft x 30 ft for the main room. Plain pilasters suggested a rhythm of bays along the side where three arch-topped windows faced north. The simple facade also featured three windows with Farr's favoured circular form of ventilator providing a decorative detail in the gable. Compared to the Presbyterian and Methodist churches he was building in 1864, the Congregational Chapel was extremely plain, without even Gothic arched windows to proclaim its ecclesiastical purpose.

The next church Farr built was another Presbyterian one, for St. Paul's congregation. The strong personality and scientific philosophy of Reverend Charles Fraser had brought dissension and division to St. Andrew's, Canterbury's first Presbyterian Church, causing some members to separate and form a new city group under the charge of Reverend George Grant, called from Akaroa.<sup>12</sup> From 1864 the group, which had chosen the name St. Paul's, met twice each Sunday in the Town Hall until they were able to purchase a section and erect a church.

The three prominent Christchurch citizens who had initiated the formation of St. Paul's as a separate group were well known to Farr. William Wilson was on the Town Hall building committee and for Drummond Macpherson, who had been involved with the Durham Street Methodist Church, Farr had built a house and offices. A third prominent founding member of St. Paul's was John Anderson of the Christchurch Iron Foundry who had manufactured the iron girders for the Town Hall. Apart from these personal

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12. P. Brunt. Deep Roots and Firm Foundations, A History of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Christchurch, 1864-1964. Christchurch, 1964.

contacts, Farr's reputation among Nonconformists was high and it is not surprising that Farr and Cuff planned the new group's church.<sup>13</sup>

- (26) The first St. Paul's was built on a section at the corner of Lichfield and Madras Streets. It was in timber with stone foundations and a slate roof. When nearing completion The Canterbury Times described it as in the Italian style though the Lyttelton Times considered it, 'unpretending in its outward appearance'.<sup>14</sup> Striking architectural character was not the aim for this building which was designed simply to provide adequate and fitting accommodation for 350 people. A basic rectangular room 60 ft x 30 ft (exactly the same dimensions as for the Congregational Chapel) was entered through two folding doors from a central front porch, while at the rear a session room or vestry 14 ft x 12 ft was provided. At the Congregational Chapel a platform rather than a pulpit was included and this was followed here, allowing the church to be adapted for other purposes.

Economic conditions were harder in 1867 than in 1864. Unlike their Lyttelton associates who had managed to provide themselves with a handsome permanent material home, the St. Paul's group were well satisfied to buy a section and erect a simple timber multi-purpose church for a total of £1,000.

In appearance there was little to distinguish this church from a school. Farr had ranged paired round-headed windows along the sides of the building between timber pilasters and placed single windows on either side of the entrance porch. The rounded arch form was repeated in a timber detail in the gable of the main facade in which a decorative circular ventilator

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13. Tender, The Press, 4th Jan. 1867.

14. Canterbury Times, 30th Mar. 1867, 'St. Paul's Presbyterian Church'.  
L.T., 24th May 1867, p.2.

was placed. Finials and triangular louvred vents along the roof added further ornament and the Canterbury Times wrote of a 'graceful turret' which surrounded the whole.<sup>15</sup> The interior was plastered above a four feet high wainscot and the roof was finished in diagonal timber sheathing as at Lyttelton, but like the Town Hall the supports were of iron. The Canterbury Times described these as 'ribs of a novel and elegant design. The circles in these ribs give them an air of lightness whilst at the same time they are of great strength'.<sup>16</sup>

Farr's design proved satisfactory, with ventilation causing less anxiety than it did at the Congregational Chapel when overcrowding became a problem. In 1874, with plans to build a new church delayed, lean-to additions were added along each side of the building to accommodate a further eighty people. Earlier, in 1871, one of the church managers was delegated to approach Armson about enlarging the church. His suggestion to build transepts was not adopted.<sup>17</sup> The 1874 additions included the dormer windows in the original roof, giving the church the appearance it has in the photograph illustrated by J. Dickson in History of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand.<sup>18</sup>

In 1872 Farr was responsible for additions to the Ferry Road Congregational Chapel where once more, much needed space was the prime objective.<sup>19</sup> In marked contrast was the ecclesiastical commission immediately after this for an Anglican church at Leeston. It is mystifying

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15. The turret is shown in a sketch illustrated by Brunt, facing p.21 but not in the photograph included by J. Dickson, History of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand, Dunedin, 1899, p.169.

16. Canterbury Times, op.cit.

17. St. Paul's Minutes of Elders, Managers and Finance Committee Meetings. Dec. 1871. St. Paul's Church Archives, Madras Street, Christchurch.

18. Dickson, p.169.

19. Tender, The Press, 1st May 1872. Keey, p.33.

that Farr, with his reputation as a Nonconformist church builder, should be given this task when Mountfort was designing the bulk of Church of England buildings at this time and had advertised for tenders for a chapel at Leeston in August 1869. Perhaps Mountfort's high principled architecture and High Church faith were not acceptable in the Leeston district or perhaps it was just that local Anglicans considered Farr an amenable, competent architect suitable to carry out their requirements.<sup>20</sup>

The church Farr designed, which was completed and furnished for (27) £350 (the site costing an extra £50), was relatively 'correct' as a colonial adaption of the ecclesiologists' principles. On the one acre section in the main street of Leeston, it was aligned with the clearly defined chancel at the east, a small projecting entrance porch on the south at the western end of the nave, and the vestry at the north. The nave's dimensions of 37 ft x 21 ft could have been proportionately longer but the roof was suitably steep in pitch, the detailing was Gothic and the triple grouping of lancet windows in the chancel was symbolic of the Trinity.

The timber church's exterior walls were ten feet high with the roof rising to an apex twenty-three feet from the ground. This allowed appropriate domination by the slightly flared roof, surmounted at the western end by a miniature belfry. Single, diamond-paned lancet windows were spaced around the body of the church and high in the western gable Farr varied his usual motif by adding an oval shaped ventilator. The small entrance porch proportioned to harmonise with the church, features Gothic arcading along each side, an attractive but inexpensive detail to complete the church.

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20. No tender has been found for this building, but Farr's authorship of the design is reported in the Canterbury Times, 28 Sept. 1872, reporting the ceremony when the foundation stone was laid.

The interior has a central aisle (for Nonconformist churches Farr favoured two aisles), and is plastered above the 3 ft 6 in wainscot. The roof is similar to that of the Lyttelton church, with diagonal boarding and angled braces. The lectern, prayer desk, altar and communion rails in kauri with Gothic ornamentation, which may also have been to Farr's design, were praised for their handsome appearance when the church was consecrated.<sup>21</sup>

Although a convinced Nonconformist, Farr was able to bring a sympathetic understanding to the task of designing an appropriate Anglican church and the success of his Leeston building is testified by its continued use after 100 years.<sup>22</sup> The church has the long low proportions, the definition of its separate parts and Gothic details similar to those found in Mountfort's designs but these were also typical Anglican features.

By mid-1872, the Congregational Chapel in Christchurch was proving inadequate for the numbers of worshippers. Accommodation problems were complicated by the system of renting seats leaving few free places for newcomers. When it was decided that money for a new building could be raised, a building committee suggested in a report on 20th November 1872, that sketch designs for a new church be invited from Messrs Farr, Mountfort, Armson and Lawson.<sup>23</sup> This did not meet with unanimous approval because many members, loyal friends of Farr's, believed he should be given the task. It was a week later before agreement was reached and the committee's suggestion was put into action. The letter Farr wrote to

21. Canterbury Times, 18th Jan. 1873, p.5. 'Leeston Church'.

22. The church now has a stuccoed exterior and the chancel furnishings have been replaced.

23. The holding of a limited competition for designs was probably Haben's idea, acting on the advice given him by Mountfort in his letter dated 5th Nov. 1872 (see Chapter 1, p.23). The fact that Habens asked for this advice sometime before the building committee prepared its recommendations suggests he did not feel confident that Farr could produce a satisfactory design.



Reverend Habens, regretting the angry discord on his behalf, expressed loyalty to the cause of the church whatever the outcome of the competition. He wrote,

'I trust I shall have grace vouchsafed to enable me to follow the example of David that I may like him having an earnest desire to build the House of God may be as liberal as my means will allow, besides helping in other ways to bring the project to a successful close, although like him may be disappointed in the coveted honour.<sup>24</sup>

Mountfort's plans were chosen and Farr's name appeared on the foundation stone of the new church as deacon, not architect. Inevitably there would have been a sense of disappointment that he had not succeeded in this competition for the church which held particular significance for him. The ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone by the Provincial Superintendent, was held on 6th November 1873. A handsome trowel commissioned for the occasion cost £6.10s, an unexpectedly high expense, so Farr personally met the cost of having it inscribed, a magnanimous gesture in the circumstances.<sup>25</sup>

Farr's commitment to the work of the Congregational church continued unchecked until 1878. By this time the new St. Paul's church had been completed and perhaps he felt a personal sense of belonging in that building which he no longer experienced in the church Mountfort had designed. At a church meeting in January 1878, it was reported that Farr, in charge of the Congregational Sunday School, had spoken to the children about another school soon to begin in the district. Evidently some heated discussion took place because the record of this in the minutes have been

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24. Keey, p.39, and archives of the Trinity Congregational Church, held at St. Paul's Church, Madras Street, Christchurch.

25. Keey, p.45.

crossed out. It was agreed at a further meeting on 27th February, that Farr's name be removed from the church roll. On the 3rd April the resignation of Mr and Mrs Farr was received and on 12th April 1878, St. Paul's records list Mr and Mrs Farr as new members. Whatever differences there had been were forgotten by 1914 when Farr was photographed as an honoured founding member at the Trinity Congregational Church's jubilee celebrations.

Connections with Christchurch's Wesleyan community were recommenced in 1873. In November Farr put requests for tenders in the newspapers for additions to the Wesleyan Parsonage at Lyttelton and the erection of the Springston Parsonage,<sup>26</sup> and early in 1874 the stone Sunday School attached to the Durham Street church was begun. (See Chapter 4, Schools, p.118.) In 1875 he organised the removal of the Wesleyan Sunday School in Lyttelton to further back on the property, allowing for additions to the church and a new wing to the Sunday School.<sup>27</sup> There may have been other work for the Methodist groups over the years but it was chiefly with the Presbyterians that he was now concerned.

For £800 the St. Paul's congregation purchased a section adjacent to their existing one, on the corner of Madras and Cashel Streets and in October 1873, resolved to build a stone church capable of accommodating 600-700 people. They planned that the costs of church and site should not exceed £4,500 and invited competitive designs from architects, offering a premium of £30 and the appointment as the building's architect.<sup>28</sup>

Farr found time to enter at the end of this busy year when he was heavily involved with school designs. The large churches he had designed for the Durham Street and the Congregational Church competitions had not been

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26. The Press, 26th and 29th Nov. 1873.

27. L.T., 2nd June and 22nd Nov. 1875.

28. The Press, 29th Oct. 1873, and St. Paul's Minutes.

used. Might he have re-used some of his ideas from these? Wesleyan, Congregational and Presbyterian building requirements were virtually identical, so little modification would be necessary.

From six entries, the St. Paul's building committee chose Farr's Gothic design and though it was not built newspaper descriptions give an indication of its appearance and plan.<sup>29</sup> It was to be built of blue rubble stone with white stone dressings and the newspaper described its style as 'seventeenth-century pointed Gothic', not a discerning or correct term. Along the sides were 'ornamental lancet windows' between 'buttresses terminated with gable finials'. The centre of the front gable would feature an elaborately decorated window with five lancet lights. At the north-west corner a tower, 'with an ornamental turret at each angle', was planned to rise to a spire one hundred feet high. In November 1873, when Farr was designing this church he was also working on the plans for the West Christchurch School, (see Chapter 4). In view of the unusual Scottish baronial turrets he used there, it is interesting to wonder just where he placed the ornamental turrets at each angle of the planned tower for St. Paul's.

The committee's choice of design was approved at a congregational meeting and some modifications were made to details before Farr called for tenders on 10th June 1874.<sup>30</sup> However when tenders were read on 23rd July, the prices of around £7,500 were considered too high. Modifications and adjustments were made to no avail and at the end of the year the lean-to additions were made to the existing building, all present hope for a new one having been abandoned.

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29. Canterbury Times, 14th Feb. 1874, p.18 repeated in L.T., 18th Feb. 1874, p.2.

30. Beneath Farr's tender in the newspaper was a separate advertisement from Thos. Cane offering lithographed bills of quantities of artificers' work required for this church. His office was also in Cookham House Chambers.

A more modest project for a Presbyterian church at Kaiapoi went ahead without problems. Established as a group in Kaiapoi since 1857, the Presbyterians had erected a small school and church building in 1860. The size of these buildings was no longer adequate by 1874 when Farr was asked to prepare plans for a new church. When tenders were called for in July 1874, a description in The Press concentrated on the convenience of the proposed building while suggesting that it would be, 'quite an ornament to the street'.<sup>31</sup> When the church was completed in January 1875, there were accounts of the opening ceremony (timed around the arrival of the mid-day train from Christchurch) in the Weekly Press and the Lyttelton Times.<sup>32</sup> The Weekly Press wrote that, 'the exterior has a bold if not an imposing appearance without being superfluously decorated'.

The church which cost £668, was a basic timber rectangle under a pitched iron roof. Well elevated on wooden piles<sup>33</sup> because of the somewhat damp site, the body of the church was 50 ft x 30 ft with seating accommodation for 220 people. (Spacing must have been more generous here than at the first Congregational and St. Paul's churches where Farr planned an area of 60 ft x 30 ft to accommodate 350 people.) Four Gothic arched windows along each side of the church were alternated with timber pilasters, a curious combination of Greek and Gothic motifs, but undoubtedly a cheaper means of adding architectural decoration than including timber buttresses as divisions. Decorative brackets under the eaves and some plain curved bargeboards added to the design and a small bell turret surmounted by a finial enhanced the modest ecclesiastical appearance. The bell was donated by John Anderson from St. Paul's, who also laid the foundation stone. His interest in the Kaiapoi church suggests that he may have put Farr's name before the group as a suitable architect.

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31. The Press, 4th July, 1874, p.2.

32. Weekly Press, 9th Jan. 1875, p.9. L.T., 8th Jan. 1875, pp2-3.

33. The Kaiapoi Museum displays one of these piles inscribed with the date 1874.

Double doors set within a Gothic arch opened from the centre of the church facade into a vestibule which was formed under the main roofline. At each side of the vestibule were two subsidiary rooms used as a vestry and book depot. The dividing walls were angled so that the vestibule broadened from the main entrance to two blue baize covered self-closing doors giving access to the two aisles of the church. The church's interior was finished like those at Leeston and Lyttelton with a timber dado, plastered walls and open timbered roof. A central octagonal pulpit added a distinctive note to this simply styled church.

Farr acquired a reputation as an architect of Presbyterian churches, his designs typifying what was being built in Canterbury in this period. He planned two more basic hall-type buildings for congregations at Papanui in 1875 and on the North Town Belt (Knox), 1880.<sup>34</sup> The North Town Belt building was entered through a broad vestibule, clearly defined on the exterior. This gave access through two doors to the aisles of the church, 70 ft x 40 ft to accommodate 500 people. Instead of a pulpit there was a semi-octagonal platform placed centrally against the end wall. Gothic windows in iron frames were placed between simple timber buttresses to give the exterior a slightly ecclesiastical appearance. This building, which cost £1,000, was intended as a temporary measure until a larger church could be erected at the corner of the section facing Bealey Avenue and Victoria Street, and once again Farr's aim in its design was a fitting but economical building.

His last two churches, both for Presbyterian congregations, were designed with a different purpose. The people of St. Paul's and Leeston wanted churches of more architectural status which would be used by succeeding generations.

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34. Tenders, L.T., 13th Jan. 1877 and 28th Sept. 1880.

(28,29) The Leeston Presbyterian Church, built in timber in 1879 outlived its usefulness and was demolished in 1981. Riddled with borer, the building which cost £901 to erect would have cost \$15,000 to restore and the Presbyterians could conveniently move into the church of the Methodists with whom they had combined. It is a great pity that this church has not survived as it was the most elaborate of Farr's timber churches and it was the only building for which a set of original drawings still exists. The Pentelow family, descendents of the brothers who contracted to complete the building of the church, have retained the plans since 1879.<sup>35</sup> In its precise translation of intricate stone Gothic detailing into timber, the church was comparable to the West Christchurch School and in its total concept it was a fine example of colonial Nonconformist architecture, particularly when it was a near neighbour of Farr's contrasting Anglican design.

Farr had some anxious moments over this church for which tenders were invited in April 1878.<sup>36</sup> The contract was let to Mr Bennett for £875 and building was about three weeks from completion in September, when a heavy north-west gale caused damage throughout Canterbury. The church's spire, some seventy feet high, was blown down and completely demolished and the building was shifted on its foundations.<sup>37</sup> Through October the Lyttelton Times reported that the contract had been abandoned by Mr Bennett who blamed the damage on defects in the design, while others alleged that the contractor had not accurately followed building instructions. Independent investigators published a report on 13th November, saying that iron braces and studs which should have strengthened the spire had been omitted and Farr's design was exonerated. The Leeston church was neither the first

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35. D.L. Pentelow, 249 Frankley Road, New Plymouth.

36. Tender, L.T., 13th April, 1878.

37. L.T., 26th Sept. 1878, p.3.

nor the last in Canterbury to suffer damage from the force of a north-west wind, but an incomplete structure was particularly vulnerable. Work recommenced with the Pentelow Brothers as contractors and when the church was completed in May 1879 a description of it appeared in the Lyttelton Times.<sup>38</sup>

The dominating feature of the church was its tower and spire at the right of the facade. The square base of the bell tower was supported by buttresses at the angles, like the stone buttresses at the Lyttelton church and at Durham Street. Though these were conventional decorative devices in Victorian Gothic Revival architecture they also added to the stability of the structure as was their original purpose, even when built of timber. The bell chamber was vented by louvres in four ornamental finial trimmed gablets and the tower culminated in a weathervane topped spire, eighty feet high at its apex.

The plane of the facade was broken by a central projecting bay with a further projection for the arched porch over the main doorway. The Gothic arches which framed the double doors here and in the tower, were outlined by timber detailing imitating stone blocks and further buttresses accented the central entrance. Similar facings ornamented the lancet windows, singly spaced along the building's sides and in a triple group on the facade - a simplified version of the design for St. Paul's perhaps. Farr completed the facade's embellishment by once more placing a circular ventilator above the triple window in the gable.

The shams and deceits of stone Gothic detailing translated into timber were contrary to the Ecclesiologists' principles of structural

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38. L.T., 8th May 1879, pp.6-7. 'The New Presbyterian Church at Leeston'.

honesty but such methods were acceptable in colonial architecture for the majority of buildings and certainly for a Nonconformist church. Farr had used materials truthfully at the Leeston Anglican church, though without the flair Mountfort would have shown. Mountfort adapted Gothic forms for honest use in timber and did not simply imitate stone motifs. Farr did not share Mountfort's high-principled approach to the Gothic style, nor to architecture generally.

Designed to hold 160 to 180 people,<sup>39</sup> the Leeston Presbyterian church was proportionately wider than the earlier preaching halls Farr had planned, 42 ft x 32 ft, with the floor gently sloping towards the front and the main focus the pulpit, semi-octagonal in shape and carefully detailed. The Lyttelton Times' correspondent wrote,

'The pulpit, with a flight of steps on either side, has a very elegant appearance being of carved woodwork standing out from a crimson velvet background, surmounted by a reading desk and crimson velvet cushions and surrounded by a deep fringe. Immediately behind the reading desk is a Gothic arch in plaster supported on capitals, under which is the door leading to the vestry.'

Farr also designed the kauri pews, arranging them with those at the sides angled for better alignment to the pulpit. Sheringham's patent ventilation valves were included along the walls and in the ceiling where the outlets were concealed by centreings of papier-maché rosettes. At the front of the church a broad vestibule gave access to the two aisles through swing doors, 'upholstered in cloth and panelled with Gothic headed nails'.<sup>40</sup> Over the vestibule was a small gallery approached by stairs in the square base of the bell tower. The object of the plan was that worshippers could

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39. The L.T. states the church was planned to accommodate that number, but the Cyclopedia in 1903, p.698 says the church held 265 people.

40. L.T., Ibid.



clearly see and hear their preacher. Farr achieved this in a building which provided Leeston with a dignified architectural expression of Presbyterian faith.

{30,31) In the city, St Paul's church has been a lasting reminder of the Presbyterian community's presence. In 1874, when the cost estimates for a new church proved too high, vigorous fund-raising activities were undertaken but little progress was made in coming to the decision to build. In July 1875, the minister Reverend Douglas resigned over a difference of opinion on church matters and his replacement, Reverend Elmslie arrived from Wanganui early in May 1876. The question of rebuilding was now approached with increased spirit.

At a meeting on 16th May<sup>41</sup> it was decided to proceed with the erection of a new church as soon as possible, but to build in timber rather than stone and avoid risk from earthquakes. Farr was present at a sub-committee meeting on 19th May with a sketch plan for a Grecian building, advising that this would be a less expensive structure than a Gothic one. It had been Elmslie's suggestion that a Grecian style be adopted as he considered this provided better acoustics. Coming from Aberdeenshire he may also have had a lingering prejudice against Gothic as a Roman Catholic style and felt it was not really suited to express the Presbyterians' post-Reformation ideals. However no such thoughts were recorded in the discussions of the plans during the following weeks when Farr prepared further details and estimates for a slate roofed timber building on a stone plinth to accommodate 1,200 people for a maximum cost of £6,783. Having obtained the building committee's approval, the plans were presented to a general meeting of the congregation on 27th June. The handsome appearance

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41. St. Paul's Minutes, and Brunt, pp.23-4.

of the building and the general plan were approved by all but the meeting decided that brick or stone be the material used. Dr Campbell, who formally proposed that the plans be adopted said, that 'he had been told that the plans had more the appearance of a corn exchange than a church, but he personally was quite satisfied with them'.<sup>42</sup>

It was 10th August before Farr had completed a new set of specifications so that tenders could be called for the building in brick as well as timber, and on the 11th August the Lyttelton Times published a full description of the proposed church, expressing the opinion that it would be 'a decided acquisition to the ecclesiastical buildings of this city'. Six tenders were received for the church to be built in timber and five for brick, ranging between £9,000 and £13,000. All were considered too high so Farr met the building committee again to consider ways to reduce costs. Enquiries had shown that the supply of suitable timber would take six months and a final decision was made to build in brick before Farr advertised for fresh tenders for his modified plan which did not decrease the accommodation. On 27th September it was announced that Mr Hyndman's tender for £7,999 had been accepted and finally the building was underway.

Farr had simply enlarged his 1874 Gothic church's floor plan from an overall dimension of 104 ft x 58 ft to 140 ft x 70 ft 10 ins, and altered the pitch of the roof, the fenestration and the decorative treatment of the wall surfaces to give the building an overall Classic dress instead of Gothic. The architectural styling here as in his other buildings, was applied as decoration to the basic shape of the building already worked out for greatest convenience. There was no question of allowing the choice of style to dictate the form of the church, which was planned as a broad

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42. L.T., 28th June, 1876, p.3.

preaching hall regardless of its exterior appearance.

Greek and Roman motifs were combined in an assured manner to provide Christchurch with a distinctive ecclesiastical building. Presbyterians elsewhere in New Zealand had chiefly been content to use conventional Gothic forms though more thought was being given to style in the 'seventies when permanent larger churches were being erected. Auckland's St. Andrew's church was given its imposing classical tower and portico in 1882, in front of the earlier simple meeting hall. Timber remained the favoured material in Wellington because of earthquake risks and both St. John's and St. Andrew's Presbyterian churches were in classical style in the 'seventies. Lawson built two magnificent stone Gothic churches for the Presbyterians in Dunedin where there was no need to be stylistically assertive in a Scottish city.

In December 1875, The Globe described the proposed new Presbyterian church for Timaru where Lawson's classical design was chosen from a limited competition. Planned to accommodate 670 people and built in concrete, this was the most important South Island usage of classical styling for a Presbyterian church before St. Paul's.<sup>43</sup>

St. Paul's church faces north onto Cashel Street with an imposing portico sheltering the main entrance. Four Doric columns, (of somewhat elongated proportions,) support the entablature with Doric frieze and pediment. Two dome-topped towers flank the portico, the one at the west originally rising to 105 ft - 32 ft higher than its counterpart. This higher tower was removed in 1962 to comply with City Council regulations, thus

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43. The Globe, 4th Dec. 1875, p.2. Trinity Church, Timaru, which opened on 15th October 1877, was an interesting early example of concrete construction. It was designed with a gallery over the vestibule as Farr planned at the Leeston church.

ruining the proportions of the facade. Farr, recognising the effect foreshortening would have on this tower's surmounting dome, extended its height in compensation. Beneath the dome was a bell chamber ornamented with louvred openings between Corinthian pillars, strongly constructed to support a one ton bell which was never erected. This tall western bell tower gave the facade an asymmetrical appearance as in the 1874 Gothic plan.

When first built the exterior may have been in plain brick, raised on the substantial stone base, with pilasters, cornice string course and other details plastered to imitate stone. The intention in 1876 was to use different coloured sands to provide two shades of plaster for the exterior and the early photographs are not clear enough to show whether this was done. Certainly there was a definite contrast in colour which highlighted the exterior's decorative features more than today when the building is a uniform grey.

The forty feet high side walls have tall windows set in iron within arched frames separated by Doric pilasters. The Doric freize does not continue along the sides, but the pilasters support a carefully detailed cornice. The rhythmic pattern provided along the walls is similar to the earlier Gothic one of lancet windows and buttresses. At the rear, a five-sided apse (half of an octagon), was retained from the first plan and given the new form of fenestration. Towards the south of each side wall, entrance porches feature Doric pilasters, entablature and pediments over tall doors within arches. The low pitched roof is ornamented by a large conical-topped drum ventilator. When first built the ventilator and domes were crowned by tall gilded finials, now reduced in size.

St. Paul's was solidly constructed with concrete foundations beneath the stone plinth. Considering the clayey nature of the soil and the varying

water table, the depth of the foundation was not really adequate to support the western tower and cracks appeared along that side. When the tower was removed in 1962, the half inch gap which had opened closed again and no further problems have arisen, though the heavy one way traffic beside the building subjects it to stresses it was never expected to meet.<sup>44</sup>

- (32) The interior plan of St. Paul's probably owed as much to the Durham Street Methodist Church and to Mountfort's Trinity Congregational Church as it did to architectural journals and books Farr may have studied. From the vestibule separate doors lead to the church's two aisles and stairway access to the gallery is provided in the tower. The curving sweep of the gallery encircles the north west and eastern perimeter of the church originally continuing its oval curve across the south end to provide accommodation for the choir and organ. Further access to the gallery and organ was provided at the rear of the church where there are two generously sized vestries. Cast iron Corinthian columns support the panelled gallery and the flooring is raked as in the main body of the church to provide good viewing from every position. The walls, panelled to the height of the pews, are plastered and painted white (distempered when new) as is the ceiling to enhance the light, airy interior.

By July 1877, it was reported that work at St. Paul's was progressing with great rapidity and that Christchurch had no other place of worship so admirable in its interior detail.<sup>45</sup> Shortly afterwards the design prepared by Farr for the pulpit was described.

'There will be a massive base of cement concrete in which the pedestal will be inserted and this support will consist of

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44. Information about the construction of St. Paul's Church kindly given by its architectural adviser and lifetime member Mr E.B. McGregor.

45. L.T., 30th July 1877, p.2.

a central square pillar of heart of kauri with four surrounding columns, the latter being relieved with fluting and having elaborately carved capitals of conventional foliage. The pulpit itself will be of an octagonal form, the panels being boldly worked in relief, and in the massive moulding the egg and dentil ornament will be prominently employed. In front of the pulpit and so placed as to form the desk support will be a beautifully carved shell having a width of about three feet and extending its base into a modification of the ever welcome honeysuckle ornament. The board of the reading desk will be fitted with an ingenious arrangement by which it can be raised or lowered at pleasure. The pulpit will be approached on either side by a winding staircase with finely moulded hand rails and exceedingly pretty cast-iron balustrades. The ledge of the pulpit will be finely relieved by the rich velvet cushions which will of course be deep blue - the Presbyterian colour.'<sup>46</sup>

The pulpit, around which the front pews curved, was indeed an original structure providing the required central position for the preacher.<sup>47</sup> Two weeks later, the Lyttelton Times reporter was critical of the changed decision to use crimson rather than blue velvet to finish the pulpit and continued,

'In the interest of good taste a protest must be made against the extraordinary collection of coloured glass which is being placed in the windows, as if it is allowed to remain the appearance of the interior will be utterly spoiled. The colours are red, blue, green, yellow and reddish purple and as they have apparently been placed without the slightest regard either to harmony, gradation or contrast, the effect produced may be more easily imagined than described.'<sup>48</sup>

In fact, the effect is an attractive one and the multicoloured borders to the windows have not 'utterly spoiled' the interior.

46. L.T., 9th Aug. 1877, p.2.

47. The original choir gallery and pulpit were removed some time after the first World War when the present timber panelling was added as a war memorial.

48. L.T., 21st Aug. 1877, p.2.

The building's ventilation scheme was given careful attention. Ventilation valves in the pilasters allowed an influx of air which was expelled through perforations in decorative medallions encircling the coved ceiling and through three patent 'sunlights'. Despite these measures, condensation and ventilation have been a problem, with the fumes of gas lighting and then heating affecting the interior plaster work, recently restored.

An indication of Victorian craftsmanship is provided in an item in the Canterbury Times reporting the finishing details in progress at St. Paul's.<sup>49</sup> The inner doors and front panelling of the gallery was being grained in imitation of bird's-eye maple for which the workman was given high praise. There was no hint of disapproval here for materials pretending to be what they were not.

Immense crowds attended the opening services on 29th October 1877, when the completed church's appearance drew congratulatory comments. At a dinner for those associated with the project, Reverend Elmslie praised the acoustic properties of the new building, saying that he had stipulated that the church, 'should not be Gothic but of such a style of architecture as would best serve the purpose in view - a two fold purpose, namely that of speaking with effect and of hearing with comfort'.<sup>50</sup>

Since 1877 St. Paul's Church has satisfactorily served Reverend Elmslie's two fold purpose, providing its congregation with a handsome building exactly suited to their form of worship, a building which gave dignity to the city centre and pride to succeeding generations of Presbyterians. Farr joined St. Paul's in 1878, soon becoming a deacon, then an

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49. C.T., 1st Sept. 1877, p.14.

50. L.T., 30th Oct. 1877, p.2.

elder and superintendent of a branch Sunday School at Bingsland. For the rest of their lives he and his wife worshipped at St. Paul's, with Farr enjoying the Jubilee celebrations in 1914. It was in this church that Farr's funeral service was held on 16th July, 1918.<sup>51</sup> During forty years attending services in the church he designed, perhaps his mind did occasionally wander from the sermon as he looked around him, because this would certainly have been the building he considered his finest achievement.

This examination of Samuel Farr's architecture has shown that his work epitomised the Victorian idea that architecture was distinguished from mere building by its ornament. Farr was adept at adding architectural detail in whatever style was currently fashionable to the basic form of buildings he had planned. Like his contemporaries, he believed that certain styles were more appropriate for each category of building, usually following Gothic modes for schools and churches, while employing a greater range of styles for domestic, public, and commercial buildings. In an age of expanding building technology he kept abreast of contemporary methods and materials, and his remarkable ingenuity was a valuable attribute which he put to good use.

Throughout England and New Zealand there were many such competent men whose experience in the building world and flair for design enabled them to serve their nineteenth-century communities well. The work of these men, like Farr, does not feature often in architectural surveys but nevertheless, their contribution is important.

Farr's deep sense of community responsibility led him to serve on

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51. Samuel and Mary Anne Farr are buried in the McBean Stewart plot at Addington cemetery.



the City Council, the Fire Police, the Education Board, the Acclimatisation Society and numerous church organisations. He felt less concern to advance the status of architects in formal association with fellow members of his profession, but he was committed to serving the cause of architecture by designing buildings which enhanced the growing city he had made his home. Many Victorian architects saw their work as an instrument of social change. Like Pugin, who emphasised the spiritual worth of Gothic architecture, they considered society would be improved by having a morally uplifting environment. Farr was too much a pragmatist to be motivated by this type of philosophy.

His career and personal life had high and low points. He won prestige and acclaim in some competitions, disappointment from others. The Town Hall, Normal School, Glenmark and St. Paul's Church were all major commissions significant in Canterbury's architectural history and in Farr's career. Much of his work was building rather than architecture and some of his designs, like the Reece building in Colombo Street, have been reduced to the former category by being stripped of their ornament and character. Such alterations focus attention on the superficial, applied nature of some of his architectural styling.

The Normal School and St. Paul's Church demonstrate his capabilities in assured designs where style and plan were exactly suited for their purpose. *Oakleigh* survives as an example of a fashionable English style and plan admirably adapted for colonial materials and conditions. Because he designed specifically for the nineteenth-century requirements of his clients, many of his buildings are inappropriate for use today. Little remains unmodified, as differing purposes, new building standards and changing concepts of domestic comfort, have necessitated alterations.

Farr's contribution to Canterbury was generous. As a colonist, he was selfless in working for the welfare of the community. As an architect, he played a major role in establishing the city's character through the 'sixties and 'seventies when permanent buildings were replacing the first hastily erected ones. Today people tend to forget that Christchurch had architects other than Mountfort, Armson and Seager, whose giant talents made them significant forces in the wider New Zealand context. However, Christchurch has always been fortunate in having a number of gifted architects who have all played some part in establishing what contemporary architectural writers have termed 'The Canterbury Tradition'. This refers to the discernable thread of continuity which links today's architectural design to that of the colonial past and Canterbury's English heritage. With his early translations of contemporary English styles into a colonial idiom, Samuel Charles Farr stands out as an important contributing architect to the developing Canterbury Tradition.

## CATALOGUE OF WORK

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Buildings are listed chronologically according to the first primary reference, usually tender notices advertised in newspapers. Included are buildings known to have been designed even when they were not built.

# Indicates surviving buildings

\* Indicates first proof of Farr's connection to a building known to have been erected.

Abbreviations: L.T. Lyttelton Times; P. The Press; W.P. The Weekly Press; C.T. Canterbury Times; McD.Biog. G.R. MacDonald, Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies, Canterbury Museum; Canty.Mus. Canterbury Museum Archives or Photographic Collection; L.O. Land Office; L.B.C. Lyttelton Borough Council.

1852 St. Peter's Anglican Church, Akaroa. Timber. Text p.11.

\*Cyclopedia p.362. L.T. 21.5.53.

1853 # ?Rev. Aylmer's House, Percy Street, Akaroa. Timber colonial.

Text p.14-15. L.T. 29.1.53. Turner p.90, Ill.

1857 # ?Blythcliffe, Rue Balquerie, Akaroa. Timber colonial. Text p.15-16.

P. 3.3.1979, p.13, History and Ill.

Farr family home, Rue Jolie, Akaroa. Timber colonial. Text p.14.

\*L.O. C216, 3D/725. South corner Rue Jolie and Bruce Terrace.

?Additions, Bruce Hotel, Akaroa. Timber. Text p.12. \*L.T. 17.2.06, p.10, S.C. Farr reminisces. L.T. 21.1.58, p.1. Bruce Hotel Advertisement. Turner p.47-50, Ill.

1858-9 Jetty at Akaroa. Timber. Text p.13. \*L.T. 9.2.59, p.4. Provincial Government letters 1858 and 59. Canty.Mus.Archives.

1861 Cottage, Rue Jolie, Akaroa. Timber. Text p.16. L.O. 11D/207, 209. Turner p.53, Ill.

1863 Mechanics' Institute, Cambridge Terrace, Christchurch. Timber. Italianate. Text p.24 and 72-73. Ill.14. L.T. 13.12.62, competition. \*P. 31.1.63, tender. P. 8.9.63, p.2, description. P. 26.3.1902, sold for removal for £80.3.5. Canty.Mus.Ill.

Dwelling House, near Lake Ellesmere. P. 11.3.63, tender.

Dwelling House for J.D. MacPherson Esq. 'near the Fendall Town Road, about 5 miles from Christchurch'. Text p.25. P. 20.6.63, tender. McD.Biog. Large house named Hawthordon.

Dwelling House, East Town Belt, Christchurch. P. 27.7.63, tender.

Additions, 'British Hotel for Mr J. Birdsey, Christchurch. P. 4.8.63, tender.

Offices in Gloucester Street for Messrs T. & E. Pavitt, Christchurch. P. 4.9.63, tender. (Farr's brothers-in-law.)

- 1863 Dwelling House for D. Lewis Esq., Lincoln Road, Halswell.  
 \*P. 17.9.63, tender to 'masons, builders and contractors'.  
 Therefore first stone house? McD.Biog. House called *Halswell House*.  
 Lewis married G. Gould's daughter.
- Shop and Dwelling House, High Street, Christchurch. P. 1.10.63,  
 tender.
- Dwelling House for J.T. Peacock Esq., Papanui Road, Christchurch.  
 Timber, Italianate. Text p.49-50. Ill.1,2. \*P. 20.10.63, tender.  
P. 6.1.64, tender for additions. McD.Biog. Hodgson, p.11. W.P.  
 15.2.05, p.10.
- Dwelling House about 4 miles from Christchurch near the Lincoln Road,  
 additions and completion. P. 4.11.63, tender.
- Dwelling House, 4½ miles from Christchurch near the Lincoln Road.  
P. 4.11.63, tender.
- Town Hall, High Street, Christchurch. Stone, neo-Romanesque.  
 Text p.27, 37, 75-79. Ill.16. \*P. 5.11.63, tender. P. 9.1.64,  
 15.9.64 and 17.9.64, descriptions. Brittendon. Canty.Mus.Ill.
- Wesleyan Church, competition design winning second place. Not  
 built. Text p.25.
- # Wesleyan Church, Durham Street, Christchurch. Stone, Gothic.  
Designed by Crouch and Wilson, Melbourne. Text p.25-26 and 125-127.  
P. 7.11.63, tender. Blight. Canty.Mus.Ill.
- 1864 Villa residence for Mr E. Reece, Windmill Road (Antigua Street),  
 Christchurch. Brick. Text p.27. \*P. 5.1.64, tender. L.T. 4.10.71,  
 advertised for sale, description. McD.Biog. Called *Forres House*.  
 First known brick building.
- Dwelling House on Rural Section No. 7, Christchurch. P. 8.1.64, tender.
- Dwelling House 8 miles from Oxford Bush. Timber, colonial.  
P. 30.1.64, tender. Mt. Torlesse Homestead. Text p.55-56. McD.Biog.  
 for E. Curry. \*Curry 'Diary', Canty.Mus.
- Stores in Cashel Street, Christchurch for J.D. MacPherson Esq.  
P. 23.1.64, tender.
- Villa residence for J. Brown Esq., Christchurch. P. 18.2.64, tender.  
 See next tender.
- Malthouse for Messrs Brown and Co. on South Town Belt, (Moorhouse  
 Avenue), near the Lincoln Road, Christchurch. Stone. \*P. 18.2.64,  
 tender.
- A Brewery for Messrs Brown and Co. on Lincoln Road, Christchurch.  
 Stone. P. 28.4.64, tender. C.T. 27.7.98, p.29-30. Description and  
 illustration of buildings, then known as Royal Brewery.
- Villa residence for C.W. Turner Esq., Papanui Road, near Merivale,  
 Christchurch. Timber, 2-storeyed, verandahed with wrought-iron  
 ornament. \*P. 7.3.64, tender. Alex.Turnbull, Staffano Webb Coll.  
 5266 1/1 and 'Richardson Album, Christchurch Homes, Gardens and  
 Groups', Canty.Mus.Ill.

- 1864 Villa residence for F.J. Garrick Esq., Papanui Road, near Merivale, Christchurch. Timber, 2-storeyed, verandah with timber ornament. Text p.50-51. Ill.13. Orwell, Church Lane. \*P. 7.3.64, tender. Mair & Hendry, 1968, No.12. McD.Biog. and ?P. 7.9.72, tender for additions.
- # St. John's Presbyterian Church, Lyttelton. Stone, Gothic. Text, p.127-128. Ill.25. \*P. 7.3.64, tender. Dickson p.177. Centenary Booklet.
- Offices for Messrs Aikman and Wilson, cnr Cashel and High Streets, Christchurch. Timber. Text p.88. \*P. 19.3.64, tender.
- # Parsonage, Ripon Street, Lyttelton. Stone, Gothic. Text p.52-53. Ill.4. \*P. 19.3.64, tender. Ill. and site plan at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Lyttelton. Present owner, Mrs M. Twomey.
- FARR AND CUFF PARTNERSHIP BEGINS
- Place of Worship for the Congregationalists, Manchester Street, Christchurch. Stone. Text p.29 and 128-129. P. 23.6.64, tender. Keey.
- Shop for Messrs J.C. Brooke and Co., Colombo Street, Christchurch. P. 23.6.64, tender.
- # Additions to Collins Hotel, Hereford Street, Christchurch. Brick. (Occidental Hotel). Text p.82. P. 17.8.64, tender. Mair & Hendry 1974, No. 53.
- Store and Offices for Messrs Hiltén and Co., Christchurch. P. 30.8.64, tender.
- Cottage residence, Christchurch. P. 3.9.64, tender.
- 'Shops etc.', for Mr C. Kiver, Cashel Street, Christchurch. Stone. Text p.29 and 88-89. \*P. 17.9.64, tender. L.T. 13.5.65, description. Canty.Mus.Ill.
- # Dwelling House for F. Pitt Esq., Rookeby (Rokeby), Sth Rakaia. Timber, colonial. Text p.54. \*P. 1.12.64, tender. Now derelict. Present owner R.C. Hart.
- 1865 Additions to a house in High Street, Christchurch. P. 1.2.65, tender.
- Shops in High Street, Christchurch for M. Harris Esq. P. 30.6.65, tender.
- # ?Dalcroy House, 10 Godley Quay, Lyttelton. Timber, two-storeyed, verandahs, and several additions. Text p.53-54. L.O. 31D118 for date house built. Cresswell, Old Homes, Lyttelton Harbour, p.31-33. Ill. See tenders 18.11.71, and 12.11.77 for Farr connection.
- Pair of shops etc. for Mr W. Peterson, High Street, Christchurch. P. 29.9.65, tender.

1865 Store etc. for D. Davis Esq., Lyttelton. Timber. \*P. 21.10.65, tender, C.T. 17.3.66, described as 'Italian style'. L.B.C. Rates Roll, Canty.Mus. D. Davis at Town Reserve No. 34.

# Dwelling House near Lake Ellesmere for Messrs Bruce and Coe, (Brucecoe Lodge). Timber, colonial. Text p.54. \*P. 9.11.65, tender. Mair & Hendry 1968, No.44. Altered from single to 2-storeyed house in 1877 by C. Cuff. Present owner Mr B. Coe, Irwell.

Large Dwelling House, Christchurch. P. 27.10.65, tender. P. 10.11.65, tender, for masons, for foundations.

Dwelling House, Papanui Road, Christchurch. P. 9.11.65, tender.

1866 Additions to Shop, High Street, Christchurch. P. 5.1.66, tender.

Shops in High Street, Christchurch. P. 1.2.66, tender.

?Mr Stringer's house, Ferry Road, Christchurch. P. 10.2.66, tender for painters.

Alterations and additions to Wellington Hotel, Tuam Street, Christchurch. P. 22.2.66, tender.

Shops, Billard Room etc. in connection with the City Hotel, Christchurch. P. 22.2.66, tender.

Dwelling House for C.R. McDonald Esq. (Glengary) at Stockgrove. Timber, colonial. Recently demolished, was on Stockgrove Road, North of Amberley. \*P. 31.3.66, tender. McD.Biog.

#### FARR AND CUFF PARTNERSHIP ENDS

Hotel and Shops on site of old Golden Fleece Hotel, cnr Colombo and Armagh Streets, Christchurch. Timber. Text p.82-83. \*P. 9.11.66, Canty.Mus.Ill.

Two shops in Colombo Street, Christchurch. P. 22.12.66, tender.

1867 Presbyterian Kirk in Lichfield Street, Christchurch. (First St. Paul's, cnr Lichfield and Madras Streets.) Timber. Text p.32, 129-131. Ill.26. \*P. 4.1.67, tender. Brunt.

New Offices for Messrs Pavitt, Gloucester Street, Christchurch. P. 17.5.67, tender.

Fountain designed for city council competition, won by C. Cuff. Not built. Text p.33. P. 4.6.67, p.2.

Two shops and dwellings attached in Colombo Street, Christchurch. P. 28.8.67, tender.

Additions to a villa residence at Avonside, near Stanmore Bridge, Christchurch. L.T. 28.8.67, tender.

Warehouse in Cashel Street, Christchurch. L.T. 9.9.67, tender.

- 1867 White Hart Hotel, High Street, Christchurch. Timber, Italian Palazzo. Text p.83-84. \*P. 29.10.67, article re Farr's recent work before beginning at Fancy Bazaar. Andersen, p.355.
- # *Hambledon*, Bealey Avenue, Christchurch, for G. Gould. Timber, Italianate. Text p.51. \*P. 29.10.67, article. P. 1.5.72, tender for Pitching Stable and yard. Clarke, p.44.
- 1868 Crystal Palace Buildings, Market Square, Christchurch (Colombo Street). Timber. Text p.89. Photograph in Canty.Mus. signed S.C. Farr, Architect, 1868.
- Large Building in the country. L.T. 4.8.68, tender; signed S.C. Farr, without 'Architect'.
- 1869 Additions to warehouse in Hereford Street, Christchurch for Messrs. Morrison, Sclanders, Fletcher & Co. L.T. 16.12.69, tender. See also tenders, L.T. 7.12.78 and 21.4.79.
- 1870 Wincolmlee Brick and Maltworks for Mr Alfred Lee Smith, opp. Heathcote Station, Christchurch. Brick. Text p.97. L.T. 8.3.72, p.3, description.
- ?New Shop for Messrs Beath and Co., Cashel Street, Christchurch. Text p.90. L.T. 18.1.70, tender. L.T. 19.1.70, Supplement refers to fire 'destroying' Beaths 26.12.69. But Canty.Mus.photographs dated 1868 and 1870 show the same building.
- Masonic Hall, Manchester Street, Christchurch. Timber on stone foundations. Text p.79-80. \*L.T. 2.2.70, tender. L.T. 23.3.70, Supplement p.1. description of foundation stone ceremony. St. Augustine Lodge 75th Anniversary booklet.
- Four new shops in Cashel Street, Christchurch. Brick. L.T. 5.5.70, tender.
- Two new brick shops, Christchurch. L.T. 13.5.70, tender.
- Additions to Cashel House, Cashel Street, Christchurch (D.I.C.). Text p.90. L.T. 13.7.70, tender. Canty.Mus.Ill.
- Dwelling House, Christchurch. L.T. 4.8.70, tender.
- # Alterations and Additions to Dwelling House for Mr F.A. Bishop, Cranmer Square. Timber, 2-storeyed villa. \*L.T. 19.8.70, tender. L.O. 14D/168. Bishop purchased sections 299 and 300 15.8.62 for #200. The present form and position of the house agrees with Strouts' map, 1877, so the portion across the front is likely to be Farr's addition. Two large rooms, flank central entrance hall on ground floor, bay window across corner at north rises through both floors to turret. Ground plan similar to *Oakleigh*, 1873 and *Te Wepu*, 1882. Front position with stairs is higher than earlier section of house behind it. Many later additions at rear. Now Cranmer Lodge, 10 Cranmer Square, owned by C.H. Nevell.
- Dwelling House, Christchurch. L.T. 10.10.70, tender.



1871 # Dwelling House for H.N. Nalder Esq., Lyttelton. Timber, 2-storeyed section and single storeyed verandahed section. Text p.56-57.  
 \*P. 28.3.71, tender. Now 21 Sumner Road, Lyttelton, owned by D.B.Lee.

Dwelling House, Christchurch. P. 5.4.71, tender.

House in Armagh Street, Christchurch. P. 17.4.71, tender.

Alterations to Al Hotel, Cashel Street, Christchurch. P. 26.4.71, tender.

Painting and Paperhanging at Mr Holley's residence, Tuam Street East, Christchurch. P. 28.4.71, tender. (May relate to earlier tender for erection of 'dwelling house', 4.8.70.) L.T. 6.2.78, tender for alterations and additions.

Villa residence in Lyttelton. P. 17.5.71, tender.

Canterbury Hotel, Lyttelton. Timber, 2-storeyed. Text p.84.  
 \*P. 20.5.71, tender. P. 13.8.71, tender for painters and paper-hangers. L.T. 14.10.78, tender for alterations and additions.  
 Canty.Mus.Ill.

School House and Teacher's Residence, Heathcote Valley. Text p.99-100. P. 1.8.70, tender. Possibly not built.

Large Goods Store at Lyttelton for Messrs Talbot and McClatchie. Brick foundations. \*P. 15.9.70, tender. Ratepayers Roll, 1876, L.B.C. Canty.Mus. shows store on reclaimed land worth £300.

School House and Master's Residence, Harewood Road, Christchurch. Timber. Text p.100. \*P. 7.10.71, tender.

# Painting exterior of Rev. J.D. Fergusson's house in Dampiers Bay, Lyttelton. P. 8.11.71, tender. (See 1865 re *Dalcroy House*.) Text p.53-54. Further tender for painting the house, L.T. 12.11.77.

1872 Cottage in town. P. 9.1.72, tender.

Warehouse for Messrs Strange and Co., High Street, Christchurch. Brick. P. 17.1.72, tender.

House in town. P. 18.1.72, tender.

Additions to a house in town. P. 1.2.72, tender.

Additions to the Congregational Chapel in Ferry Road, Christchurch. P. 1.5.72, tender.

Brick building in Hereford Street, Christchurch, adjoining the B.N.Z. for Messrs Jones Bros. P. 17.6.72, tender.

Two cottages on the South Town Belt (Moorhouse Avenue) near Durham Street. P. 31.7.72, tender.

Parsonage at Papanui, Christchurch. Timber, 2-storeyed villa. Text p.58-59. \*P. 5.9.72, tender. P. 30.9.72, tender accepted. Jubilee Booklet, Papanui Parish 1853-1828. Ill.

- 1872 # Alterations and additions to house of F.J. Garrick Esq., Merivale. Timber. Text p.50-51. P. 7.9.72, tender. *Orwell?* or *Amwell?* Mair & Hendry, 1968 Nos. 12 and 14. *Amwell*, 166 Papanui Road, owned by J.B. Buxton.

Warehouse and Office in Hereford Street adjoining Messrs Jones new building. Brick. P. 26.9.72, tender.

- # Anglican Church, Leeston. Timber, Gothic. Text p.131-133. Ill.27. \*C.T. 28.9.72, p.5, description of building.

House at Sumner. P. 4.10.72, tender.

- # Additions to house for Mr Stanley, Harewood Road. Timber. Text p.57-58. \*p. 4.11.72, tender. McD.Biog. Now Shenley Orchard, 656 Wairakei Road, owner Mr I. Clarke, who has photographs before and after the 1872 additions.

Building in the Whately Road (Victoria Street), Christchurch for Mr R.M. Cresswell. Brick. P. 21.11.72, tender.

Congregational Church design for limited competition, won by B.W. Mountfort. Text p.133-134. Not built. Keey, p.38-9.

Additions to a house at Papanui, Christchurch. P. 9.12.72, tender.

- # Red Lion Hotel, Rangiora. Brick. Text p.84-85. Ill.17. \*P. 19.12.72 and 31.12.72, tender. W.P. 9.3.98, p.8. Ill. See 17.1.73.

Block of buildings for G. Gould Esq., Market Square, Christchurch. Brick. Text p.90. P. 20.12.72, tender. Canty.Mus.Ill.

Two shops in High Street, Christchurch for Mr G. Prebble. Brick. P. 21.12.72, tender.

- 1873 # Cottage on Red Lion property, Rangiora. Concrete. Text p.62-63. \*P. 17.1.73, tender. Now 80 Ivory Street, similar house on what was also Red Lion property, now 8 Collins Street.

House at Middleton. P. 6.2.73, tender.

- # Block of buildings for the Rev. T.R. Fisher on the site of the late fire in Hereford and High Street, Christchurch. Brick. Text p.90-91. P. 6.12.72 tender for pulling down and removing ruins of buildings. \*P. 15.1.73, tender for erecting new one. Canty.Mus.Ill.

- # House at Oakleigh near Southbridge for C. Hurst Esq. Timber, Italic. Text p.59-60. Ill.6,7. \*P. 17.2.73, tender. Mair & Hendry 1968, No.46. Penney, L. Ellesmere to Te Piritā, p.21. Graham and Chapple, Ill. between p.80-81. Present owner B. Nimmo.

Brick building in Cashel Street, Christchurch. P. 1.3.73, tender.

Alterations to a building in Whately Road (Victoria Street), Christchurch. P. 8.3.73, tender.

House at Southbridge. P. 26.4.73, tender.

1873 # ?Alterations to a building and erection of a new shop in Cashel Street near Oxford Terrace, Christchurch. P. 10.5.73, tender. Plastered brick, 2-storeyed building adjacent to Turners, cnr. Oxford Terrace and Cashel Street, has similar parapet design to that of Fisher building (tender 15.1.73). Present address 81 and 83 Cashel Street.

House at Sumner. P. 3.7.73, tender.

# Normal School, Cranmer Square, Christchurch. Stone, Gothic. Text p.105-116. Ill.22,23. P. 18.4.73, competition. \*P. 18.6.73 results and description. Sheppard. Canty.Mus.Ill.

Brick building in Cashel Street, Christchurch. P. 15.8.73, tender.

Chimney Shaft and setting of a large boiler, Christchurch. \*P. 24.9.73, tender. C.T. 6.12.73, p.5. 'City Improvements re chimney for Montgomery and Co.

House at Leeston for Mr Minchener. P. 27.8.73, tender.

Office for the Leeston Roads Board. P. 27.8.73, tender.

# Shop and dwelling for Messrs Clarkson Bros, Butchers, Cashel Street, Christchurch. Brick. \*P. 4.9.73, tender. L.O. records show this is now 82 Cashel Street, (Fail's Cafe). Ground floor altered but side shows Farr's characteristic plastered wall, incised to imitate stone. Exterior, upper floor little altered.

Additions to House at the Acclimatisation Society Gardens, Christchurch. P. 24.9.73, tender. Lamb, p.32. Ill.

House at Gloucester Street East, Christchurch for Mr Sandstein. P. 2.10.73, tender.

Additions to the Wesleyan Parsonage, Lyttelton. P. 26.11.73, tender.

Additions to the Fish House, Acclimatisation Society Gardens, Christchurch. P. 29.11.73, tender.

# Wesleyan Parsonage at Springston. Timber. Text p.58. \*P. 29.11.73, tender. L.T. 4.3.74, description. Morley, Ill. p.433. Present owner Mrs Stolp.

# Library at Akaroa. Timber. Text p.74-75. Ill.15. C.T. 29.11.73, re Farr donating plans. W.P. 29.5.75, p.16, opening.

West Christchurch District School, Halgley Avenue, Christchurch. Timber, Gothic. Text p.119-120. Ill.24. P. 16.12.73, tender. L.T. 18.2.74, p.3, description. P. 4.2.74, p.3, description. Canty.Mus. Ill.

# Wesleyan Sunday School, Durham Street, Christchurch. Stone, Gothic. Text p.118-119. \*P. 29.12.73, tender. P. 4.2.74, p.3, description. Adjacent to present church, now obscured by Aldersgate addition.

- 1874 District School for the East Christchurch School Committee, Bingsland (Richmond), Christchurch. Timber, Gothic. Text p.117-118. \*P. 2.1.74, tender. P. 4.2.74, p.3, description. Walshe, Ill.
- Alterations to shop in High Street, Christchurch, for Messrs Wood Bros, Saddlers etc. P. 6.1.74, tender.
- District School for the East Christchurch School Committee, Barbadoes Street South, Christchurch. \*P. 8.1.74, tender.
- Building in Manchester Street, Christchurch. P. 4.2.74, tender.
- Public Library, St. Albans, Christchurch. Text p.73-74. \*P. 14.4.74, tender.
- St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, cnr Madras and Cashel Street, Christchurch. Timber, Gothic. Not built. Text p.135-137. P. 29.9.73, competition announced. P. 7.1.74, result announced. P. 10.6.74, tender.
- Presbyterian Church, Kaiapoi. Timber. Text p.137. \*P. 4.7.74, tender. W.P. 9.1.75, description. Dickson, p.17. Ill.
- Christchurch Public Library design for limited competition, won by W.B. Armson. Not built. Text p.75. L.T. 27.7.74, p.2.
- Additions to District School, Springston. Timber, Gothic. Text p.104. \*P. 27.7.74, tender. The Centennial Book of Springston School, Ill.
- Dwelling House for Mr T.D. Jones, Lichfield Street East, Christchurch. P. 19.8.74, tender.
- House in Worcester Street, Christchurch. P. 21.10.74, tender.
- Dwelling House in Lyttelton. P. 17.11.74, tender.
- 1875 House at the corner of Chester and Madras Streets, Christchurch. \*L.T. 22.2.75, tender. L.O. 70D/487, Mr H. Fuhrmann, upholsterer, owned section. Died 1907, leaving £100 to 'Charles [sic] Farr, architect, Christchurch' in his will. McD.Biog. See next tender.
- Warehouse and cellarge in Cathedral Square. Brick. L.T. 22.2.75, tender. Fuhrmann (see above) had carpet warehouse 69 Cathedral Square, north-west side, so possibly this tender was for him.
- Hotel at East Malvern (Sheffield). Timber. Text p.85. \*L.T. 1.3.75, tender. McLennan, p.34.
- # Manager's House, Glenmark, Waipara. Timber and concrete, Gothic. Text p.65. Ill.8. \*L.T. 6.3.75, tender. Stacpoole, p.160-162. Mair & Hendry, 1974, No.20. Canty.Mus.Ill. Present owner Mr D.Gould.
- Additions to the Lower Heathcote District School on Ferry Road, Christchurch. L.T. 6.4.75, tender. L.T. 24.1.76, tender for sundry works. L.T. 6.3.76, tender for leveling and draining grounds.
- Additions to Wesleyan Sunday School, Lyttelton. L.T. 2.6.75, tender. L.T. 22.11.75, description.

1875 Villa residence at Akaroa. L.T. 3.8.75, tender.

- # Villa residence at Lyttelton for Dr McDonald. Timber, stone cellar. \*L.T. 10.9.75, tender for cellarge. L.T. 29.9.75, tender for erection of house. Alterations have now disguised original character, decorative brackets under eaves. Present owner P. Fogarty, address 29 Oxford Street.
- # \*L.T. 28.10.75, tender for a dispensary for Dr McDonald, adjacent to his house. Later used as chemist shop, now Noko's Coffee Bar.
- # Warehouse for C.W. Turner, corner Cashel Street and Oxford Terrace, Christchurch. Brick and plaster. Text p.91. \*L.T. 9.10.75, description.

Additions to house of H. Lake Esq., Worcester Street, Christchurch. L.T. 15.10.75, tender.

- # House, Barbadoes Street, Christchurch. Timber. Text p.43. \*L.O. AS992, S.C. Farr's house designed for himself in 1875. Two-storeyed; stairway decorated like Lyttelton Parsonage, Oakleigh, Springfield; wooden banister. Verandah around north and west sides, large double hung windows altered on second floor. Alterations confusing, but main entrance from Barbadoes Street; two main rooms across north facade facing Armagh Street. Now 318 Barbadoes Street, owner Mrs V. Limic.

1876 Dwelling House for Mrs W.G. Lunn, Leeston. L.T. 11.1.76, tender. McD.Biog. W.G. Lunn, Clerk of Leeston Road Board.

Alterations and additions to house at Papanui Road, Christchurch for W. Norman Esq. L.T. 5.2.76, tender. McD.Biog. Norman's property on north corner of Normans and Papanui Roads. L.T. 23.2.77, tender for hot-house and additions to house of W. Norman Esq.

- # Building for Montgomery and Company, cnr Colombo and Tuam Streets, Christchurch. 3-storeyed plastered brick. Text p.91-92. Ill. 19, \*L.T. 6.3.76, tender. L.T. 23.3.76, description.

Alterations and additions to house for A. Broadfoot Esq. near Amberley. Timber. \*L.T. 28.4.76, tender. Large single-storeyed timber house, Beach Road, Amberley, demolished c.20 years ago.

- # St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, cnr Madras and Cashel Streets, Christchurch. Plastered brick and stone, classical. Text p.142-149. Ill. 30,31,32. L.T. 10.8.76, 6.9.76, tenders. L.T. 9.8.77, description. Brunt. Dickson, p.169-171. Canty.Mus.Ill.

1877 Alterations and additions to a house in Colombo Street South, Christchurch. L.T. 11.1.77, tender.

Presbyterian Church, Papanui, Christchurch. Timber, Gothic. \*L.T. 13.1.77, tender. Simple timber building, some Gothic details, later used as hall.

- # Hotel at corner of Madras Street and South Town Belt (Moorhouse Avenue) for Mr J. Mumford, Christchurch. Brick. Text p.86-87. Ill.18. Grosvenor Hotel. L.T. 10.2.77, tender. L.T. 12.2.78, tender for additions.

- 1877 *Glenmark House*, for G.H. Moore Esq., Waipara. Timber and concrete, Gothic. Text p.65-69. Ill.10,11,12. L.T. 15.2.77, 28.4.77, 6.8.77, tenders. L.T. 24.1.91, 26.1.91. P. 26.1.91, p.6, account of fire and description. Cresswell, Squatter & Settler. Stacpoole, p.160-162. P. 20.3.1976, 27.3.1976, articles by H.T. Hartley. Canty.Mus.Ill.
- # *Glenmark*, Gate Lodge for G.H. Moore Esq., Waipara. Timber and concrete, Gothic. Text p.65. Ill.9. No tender found for this specific building, nor for the surviving concrete stable block, text p.69.
- House in Armagh Street East, Christchurch. L.T. 9.3.77, tender.
- # Offices in Lyttelton for Messrs Miles, Hassal and Co. Concrete. Text p.92. \*L.T. 27.7.77, tender. L.T. 10.4.77, advertisement describing offices to let. McD.Biog. Two-storeyed building, inscribed to look as if built from stone. Archway through to rear. Now 16 Norwich Quay, present owner B.J. McSherry.
- Shop etc. for Messrs Garforth and Lee, Lyttelton. \*L.T. 28.7.77, tender. Adjacent to surviving Miles, Hassal & Co. offices on Norwich Quay but replaced.
- Additions to dwelling house for E.C. Minchin Esq., Springfield Road, Christchurch. L.T. 4.8.76, tender.
- House in Hereford Street, Christchurch. L.T. 18.9.77, tender.
- Town Hall, Ashburton. Timber. Text p.80-81. \*L.T. 5.10.77, tender. Silverwood, p.21. Ill.
- # Dwelling House at Springfield Station for Messrs Gould and Cameron. Timber, Italianate. Text p.60-61. \*L.T. 23.10.77, tender. Additions disguise its original appearance. W.P. 11.11.08, p.48, Ill. shows side view. Springfield Homestead, R.D.6, Ashburton, present owner R.B. Maw.
- # House for Dr Stewart, Ashburton. Concrete. Text p.63. Single-storeyed, symmetrical plan, now divided into two flats, 4 Beach Road, Ashburton.
- Shops and Offices at Ashburton for Messrs Montgomery and Co. Ltd. \*L.T. 19.12.77, tender.
- 1878 # Warehouse in Manchester Street, Christchurch. Concrete. \*L.T. 4.2.78, tender. L.T. 7.2.78 'New Warehouses', description of two adjoining warehouses for J. Taylor and J. Rowley, between Tuam and Lichfield Streets. Now stripped of ornament, 112-114 Manchester Street.
- Shop and dwelling house in Manchester Street, Christchurch. L.T. 5.2.78, tender.
- Warehouse, shop and dwelling house in Christchurch. L.T. 27.2.78, tender.
- Dwelling house in Lyttelton. L.T. 14.3.78, tender.
- # Hotel at Amberley. Timber. L.T. 29.3.78, tender. Simple two-storeyed structure. Now the Railway Hotel at Amberley.

- 1878 Three shops and dwellings in Manchester Street South, Christchurch for Mr J. Rowley Snr. L.T. 3.4.78, tender.

Presbyterian Church, Leeston. Timber, Gothic. Text p.139-142. Ill. 28,29. L.T. 13.4.78, tender. L.T. 27.10.78, tender for completion. L.T. 8.5.79, description. Dickson, p.455. Ill. Mr D. Pentelow, New Plymouth, plans.

Family Hotel in Armagh Street East, Christchurch, for Mr A. Hamilton. L.T. 30.5.78, tender. Not built. No trace of any hotel for Mr Hamilton or in Aramgh Street at this date.

House for Mr W. Gosling, Salisbury Street, Christchurch. Brick. L.T. 15.6.78, tender.

Hotel planned for Ashburton, Baring Square. Not built. Text p.81. L.T. 16.7.78, p.2, description.

- # Additions and Alterations to the Crown Hotel, Amberley for Mr H. McLean. Timber. L.T. 12.8.78, tender. P. 7.10.75, tender for erection of this hotel, Cornelius Cuff. Altered but still used, early photographs in bar.

Hotel planned for corner of Kilmore and Barbadoes Streets, Christchurch. Not built. Text p.87. L.T. 20.8.78, p.2, description.

Dwelling House in Gloucester Street West, Christchurch. L.T. 4.9.78, tender.

- # Shop and warehouse for E. Reece Esq., Colombo Street, Christchurch. Brick and stone, three-storeyed. Text p.93. Ill.20. L.T. 10.9.78, tender for removal of present building and replacement at rear of site. \*L.T. 24.9.78, tender for new building. L.T. 25.9.78, Supplement 'New Buildings', description. Now, stripped of cornice and ornament, 661 Colombo Street.

Footbridge at *Elmwood*, Christchurch for R.H. Rhodes Esq. L.T. 30.10.78, tender. W.P. 18.1.99, p.8, photograph of rustic bridge in Elmwood grounds, c.f. design for bridge Vaux, p.288.

House for Gas Co., Lyttelton. Brick. L.T. 4.11.78, tender. Not built. Rates Roll, L.B.C., Canty.Mus. shows no house owned by Gas Co.

- 1879 # Offices for J. Anderson Esq., Lichfield Street, Christchurch. Text p.93-94. Ill.21. L.T. 8.1.79, tender. L.T. 25.9.78, Supplement, description. Ornament removed and weathered, but little altered, 43 Lichfield Street.

Alterations and additions to house in Cranmer Square. L.T. 27.1.79, tender.

Alterations and additions to house at Sumner Road for Mrs Rule. Timber. \*L.T. 13.6.79, tender. Mrs Mary Rule, widow of James Rule, passenger on Monarch, owned Cave Rock Boarding House, Sumner. Farr may have built her house earlier, see tenders 3.7.73, or 4.10.72. McD.Biog. Canty.Mus.Ill.

Three shops and dwellings for G. Gould Esq. in Victoria Street, Christchurch. L.T. 28.7.79, tender.

- 1879 Alterations and additions to premises in Colombo Street, Christchurch. L.T. 11.11.79, tender.
- 1880 # Shops and offices cnr Manchester and Gloucester Streets, Christchurch. Brick and concrete. Text p.95-96. L.T. 9.3.80, Public notice re building to be erected for rental. L.O. 91D.551.
- Villa residence at Riccarton. L.T. 20.5.80, tender.
- Residence at Lyttelton. L.T. 9.6.80, tender.

#### FARR AND SON PARTNERSHIP COMMENCES

- Presbyterian Church on the North Town Belt (Bealey Avenue), Christchurch. Text p.138. First Knox Church. \*L.T. 28.8.80. tender. L.T. 31.8.80, p.4, description.
- Cottage in Armagh Street, Christchurch for Mr A. Brown. L.T. 7.9.80, tender.
- # Block of buildings at corner of Manchester and Tuam Streets for Mr T.H. Green. Brick, plaster, terracotta. Text p.96. L.T. 21.9.80, tender.
- House of North Town Belt (Bealey Avenue), Christchurch. L.T. 9.10.80, tender.
- Brewery at the Standard Brewery Company, Christchurch. \*L.T. 2.11.80, tender. Brick. Became Crown Brewery, now Lion Brewery on original site, cnr St. Asaph and Antigua Streets. Canty.Mus. J. McKenzie Collection Neg. 3735, Ill.
- Cottage in Sydenham, Christchurch. L.T. 3.12.80, tender.
- 1881 Dwelling house near the Carlton Hotel, Christchurch. P. 9.2.81, tender.
- Dwelling house at Riccarton. P. 13.4.81, tender.
- Villa residence at St. Albans, Christchurch. P. 5.7.81, tender.
- House at Addington for Mr Williams. P. 5.9.81, tender.
- 1882 # Villa residence for H.R. Webb Esq., Papanui Road, Christchurch. Timber. Text p.70-71. Ill.13. \*P. 7.1.82, tender. *Te Wepu.* McD.Biog. Miss E. Webb, Ill. Now 122 Papanui Road, converted into flats, owner I.C. Wilson.
- House near Lancaster Park for W. Norman Esq., Christchurch. P. 12.4.82, tender.
- Semi-detached houses in Kilmore Street, Christchurch. P. 8.5.82, tender. Several pairs of semi-detached houses survive in Kilmore Street.

#### FARR AND SON PARTNERSHIP DISSOLVED 12.9.82



- 1882 Villa residence at Opawa. P. 12.12.82, tender.
- 1883 Residence for the Selwyn County Council, near Kirwee. P. 28.2.83. Canty.Mus.S.C.C. archives, house built for caretaker of Malvern water race, on part of Reserve No 1744, Tramway Road, 3 km west of Kirwee.
- 1884 Stables etc. in brick for Mr J. Jackson, Papanui, Christchurch. P. 24.7.84, tender.
- 1885 Cottage in brick, Madras Street, Christchurch. P. 1.10.85, tender.  
Goods shed at Officers Point, Lyttelton. P. 3.11.85, tender.
- 1887 Alterations to a building in Lyttelton, chiefly brick work. L.T. 21.1.87, tender.
- 1898 # Green's Point Memorial, Akaroa. Cyclopedia p.361-2 refers to Farr designing this monument.
- 1899 # Bas-relief of Banks Peninsula. Text p.45. Made for Fiftieth Jubilee Exhibition 1900 and awarded gold medal. Bas-relief displayed at Akaroa Musuem.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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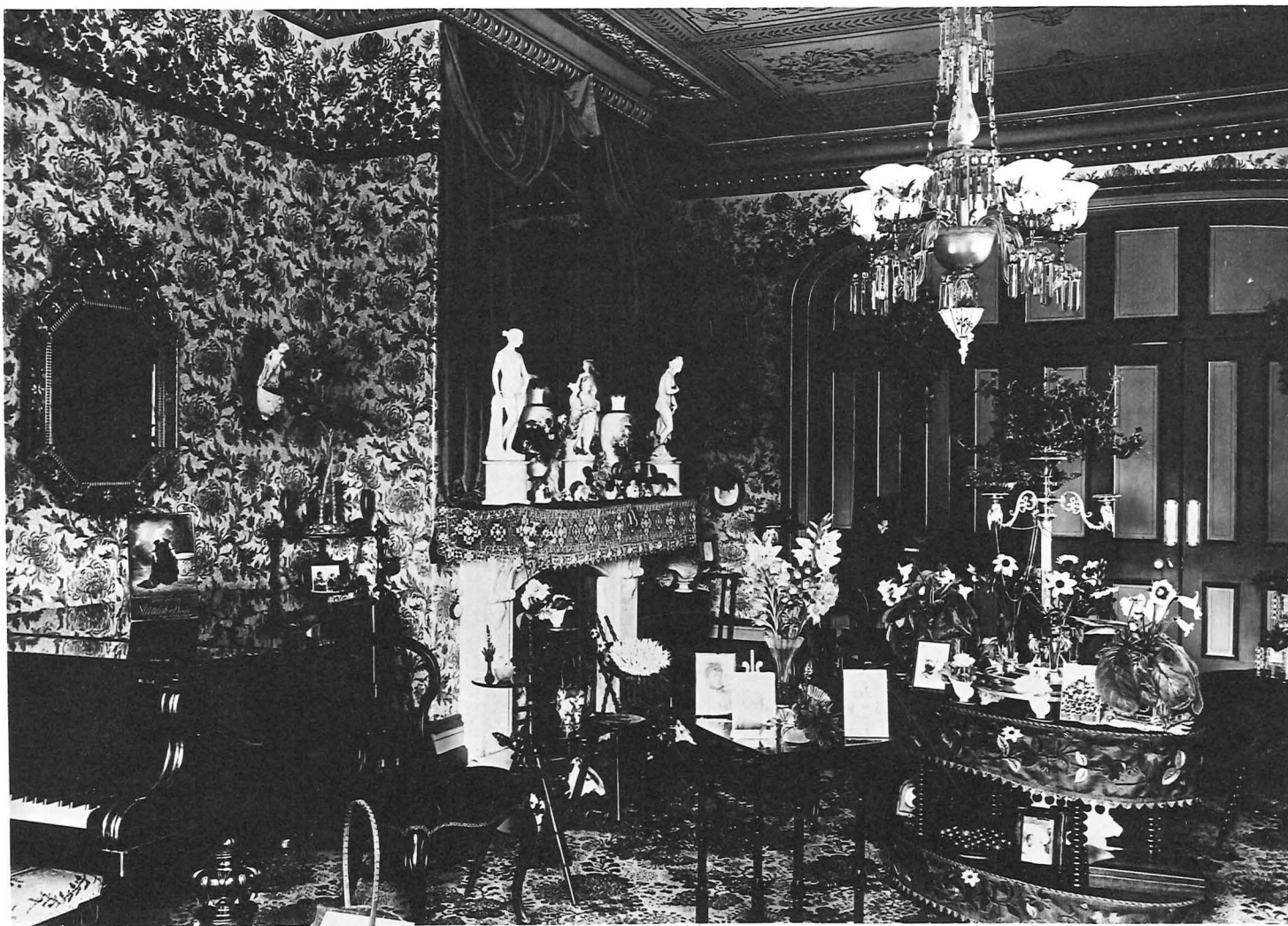


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## ILLUSTRATIONS



1. *Hawkesbury*, Papanui Road, Christchurch. 1863. Exterior.



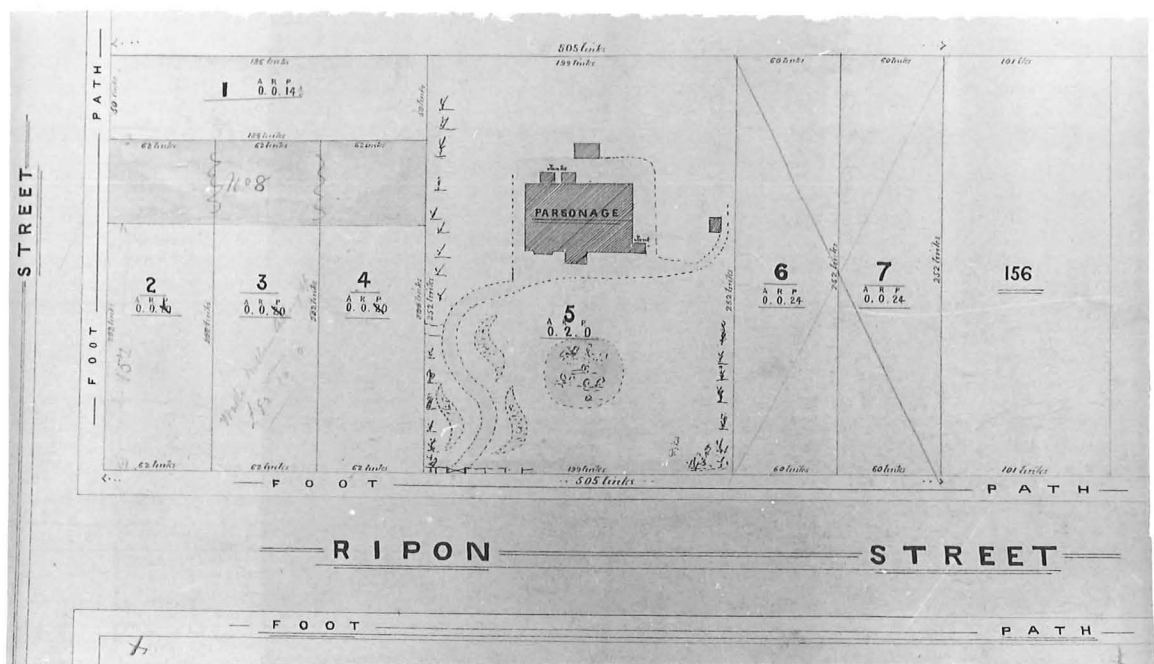
2. Hawkesbury, Papanui Road, Christchurch. 1863. Interior.



3. *Orwell*, Church Lane, Merivale, Christchurch. 1864.



4. Parsonage, 26 Ripon Street, Lyttelton. 1864.



5. Detail of site plan, Parsonage, Lyttelton. 1864.





6. *Oakleigh*, Southbridge. 1873.



7. Detail of stairs, *Oakleigh*, Southbridge. 1873.



8. *Glenmark, Waipara, Manager's House.* 1875.

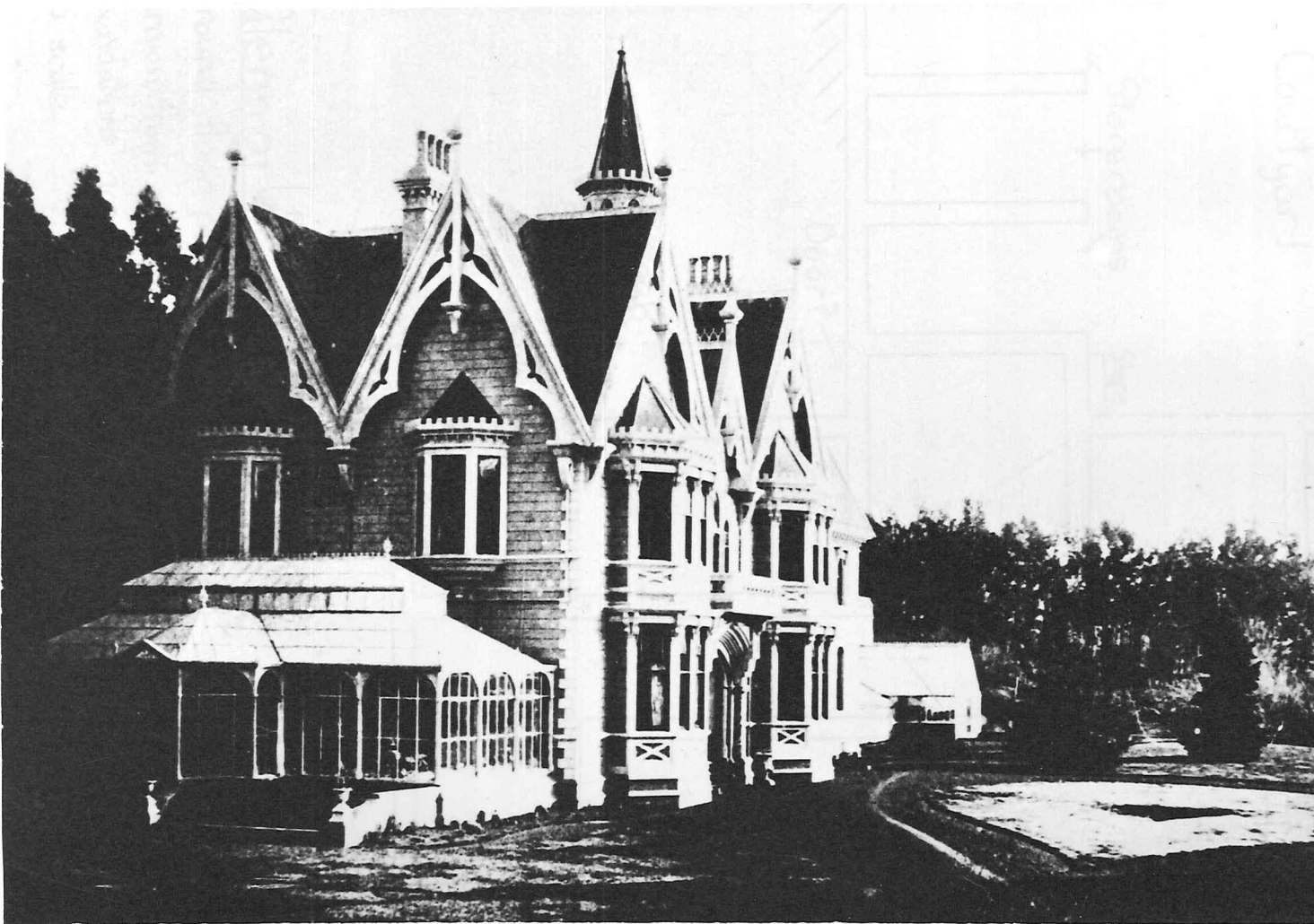




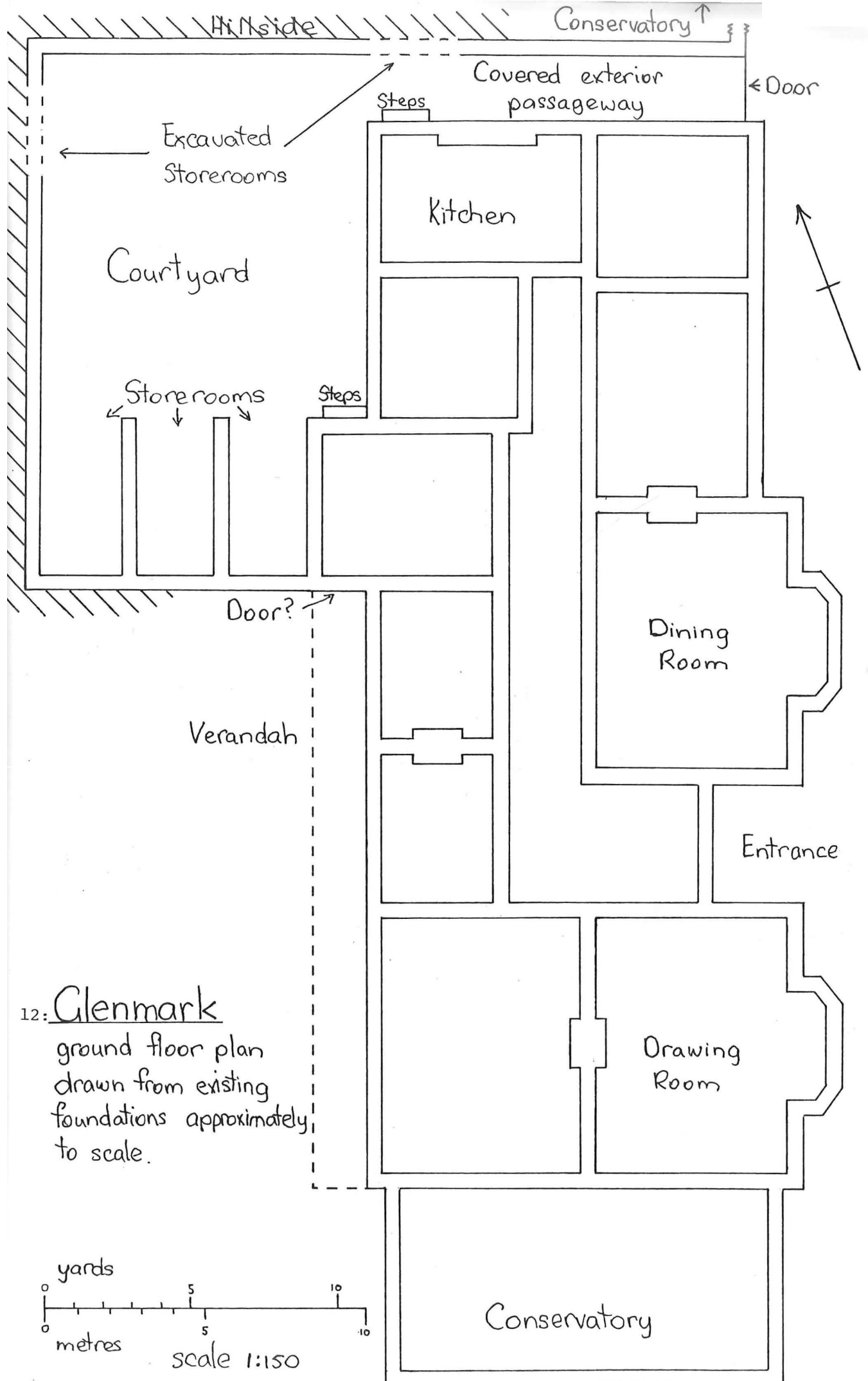
9. *Glenmark*, Waipara, Gate Lodge. 1875-80.



10. *Glenmark, Waipara.* 1877-82.

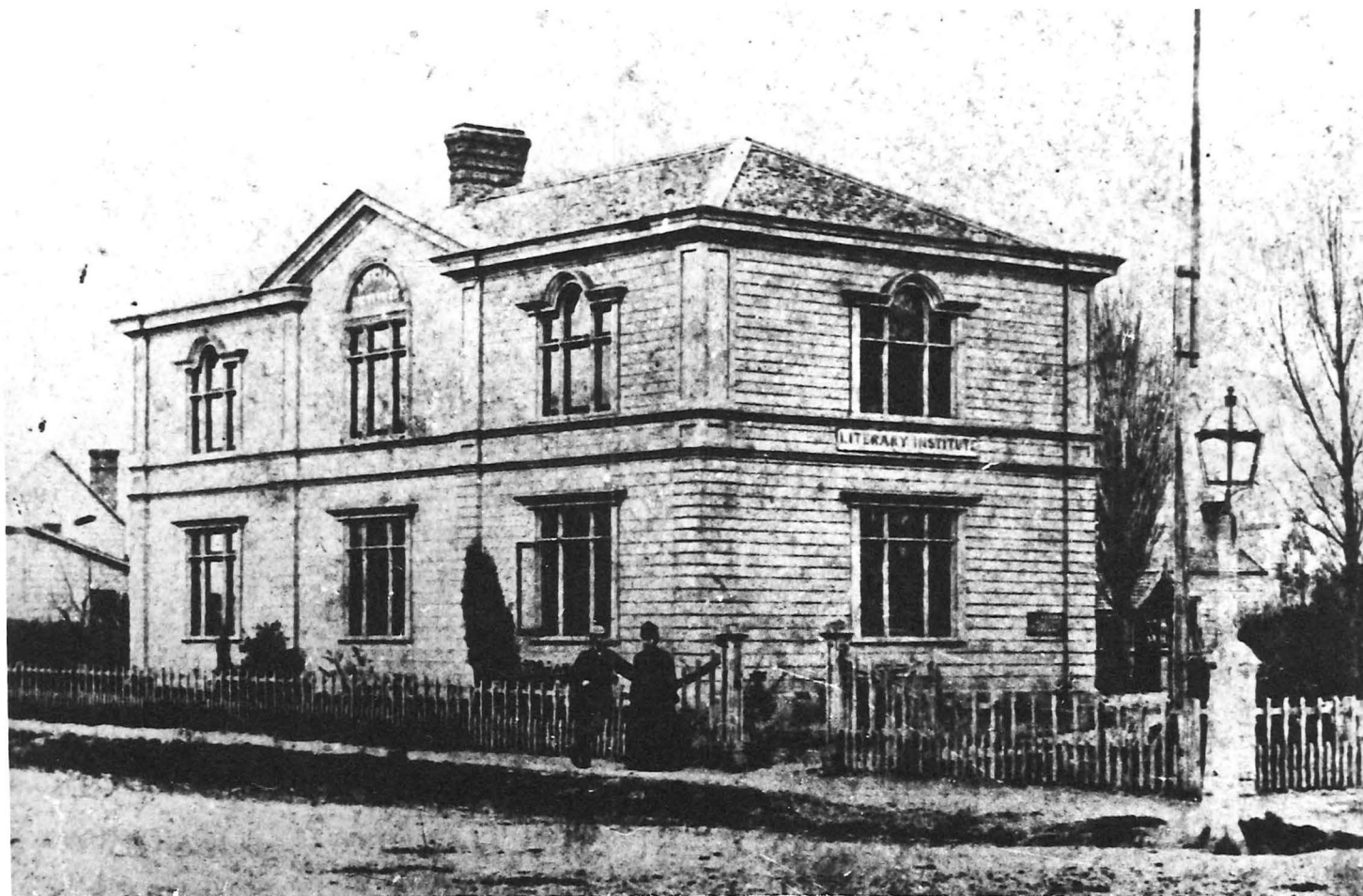


11. *Glenmark*, Waipara. 1877-82.



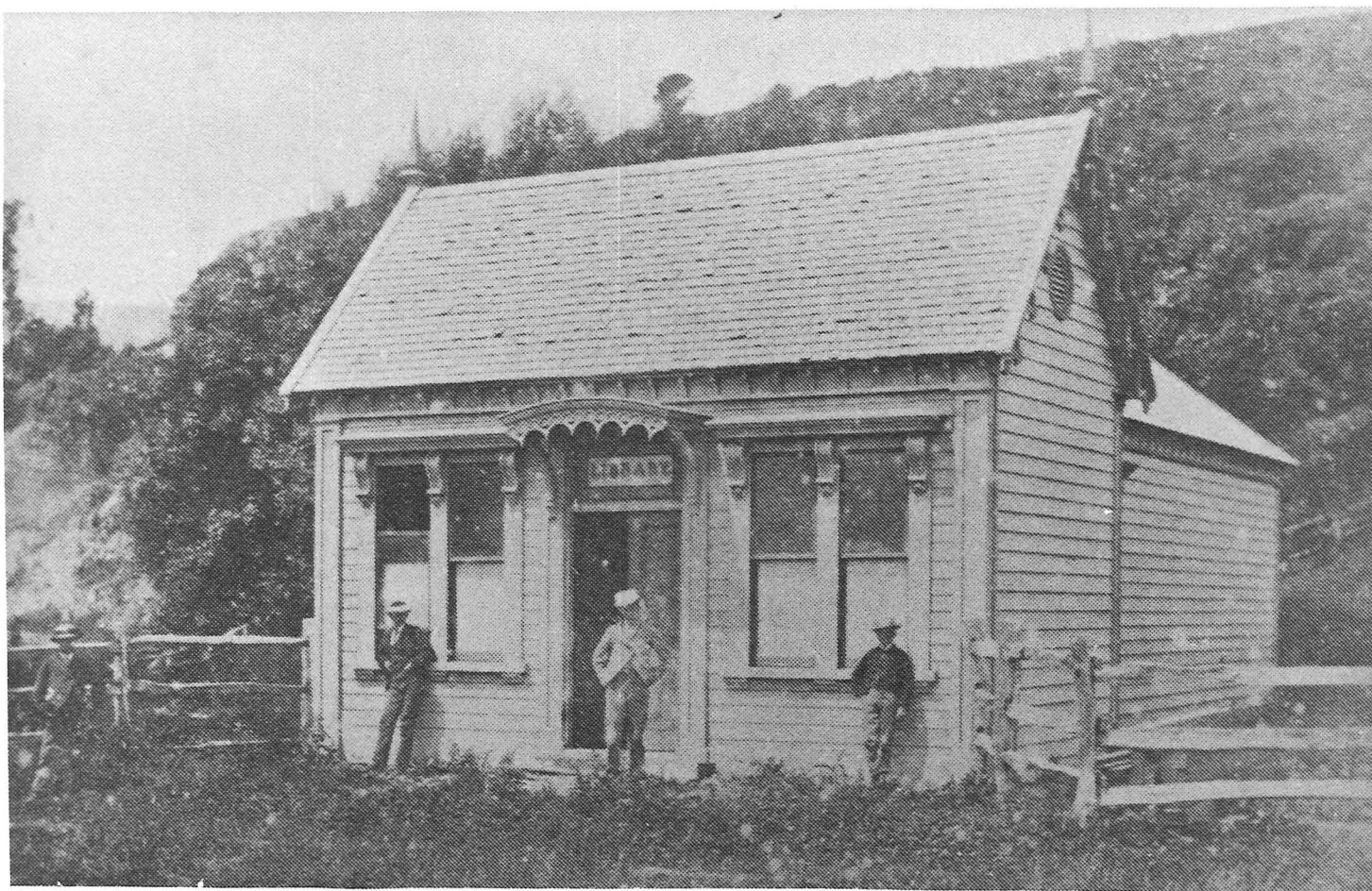


13. *Te Wepu*, Papanui Road, Christchurch. 1882.



14. The Mechanics' Institute, Cambridge Terrace, Christchurch. 1863.





15. Library, Akaroa. 1873-5.



16. Town Hall, Christchurch. 1863.





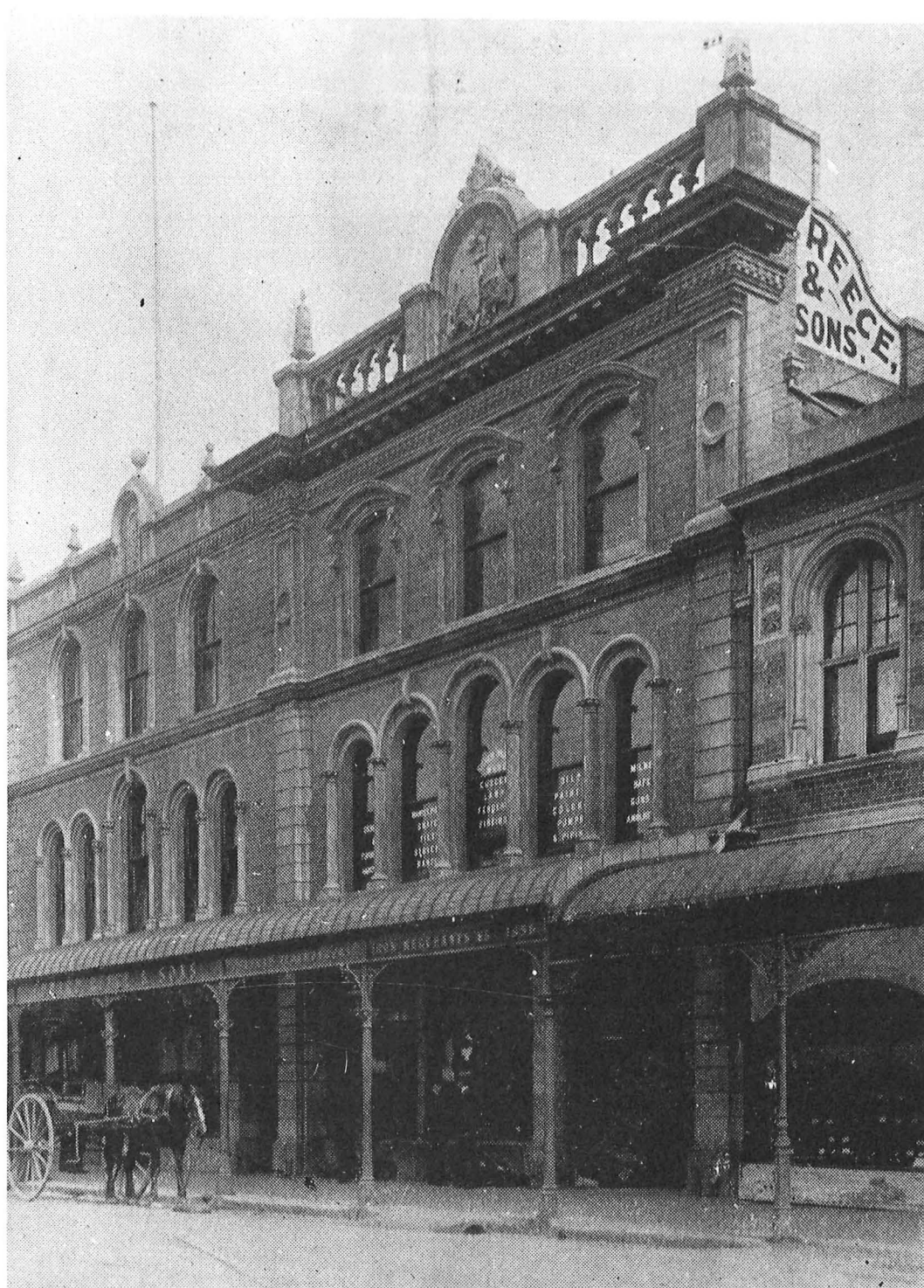
17. Red Lion Hotel, Rangiora. 1873.



18. Grosvenor Hotel, corner Madras Street and Moorhouse Avenue, Christchurch. 1877.



19. Montgomery and Company's Offices, corner Colombo and Tuam Street, Christchurch. 1876.

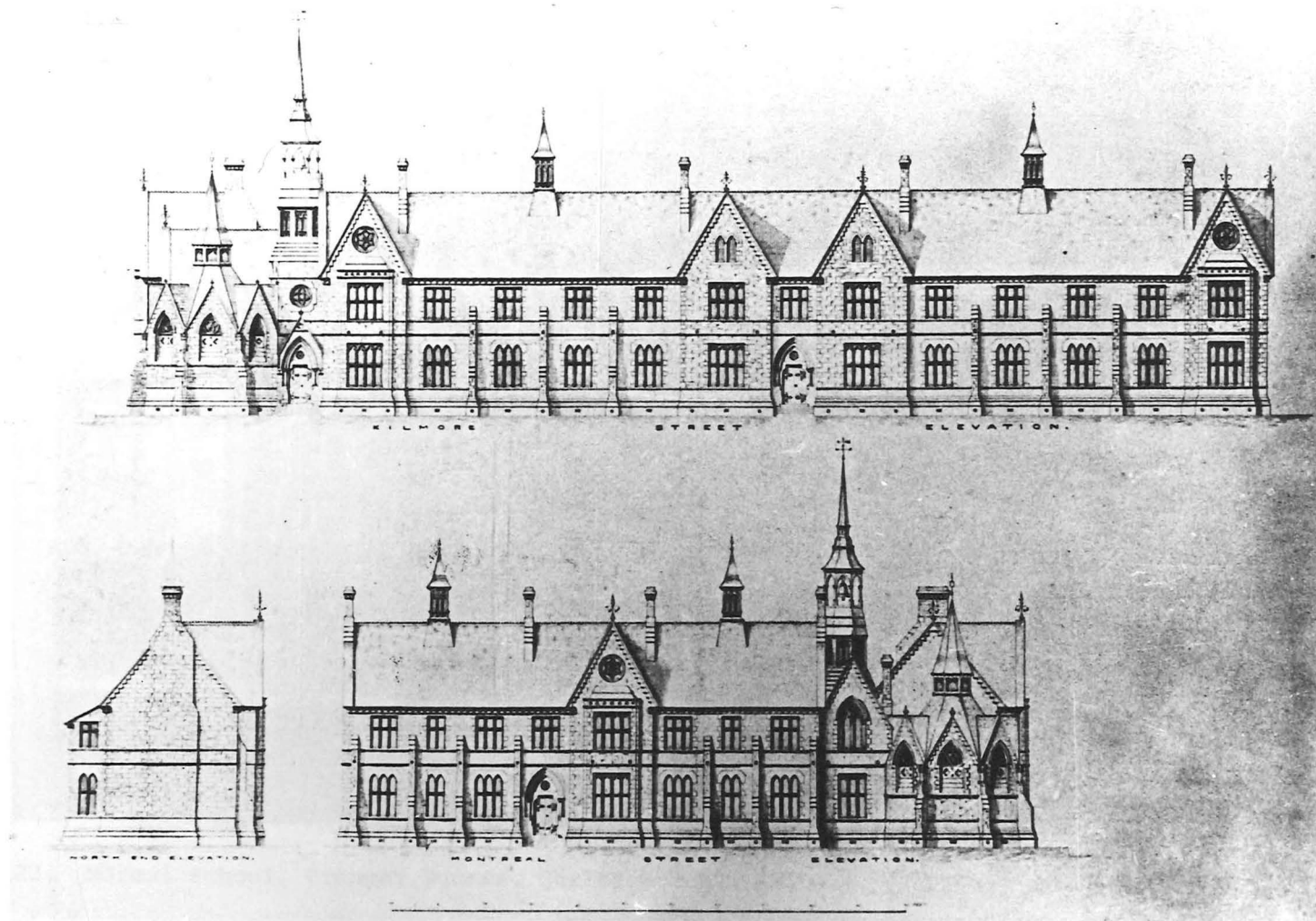


20. E. Reece's shop and warehouse, Colombo Street, Christchurch. 1878





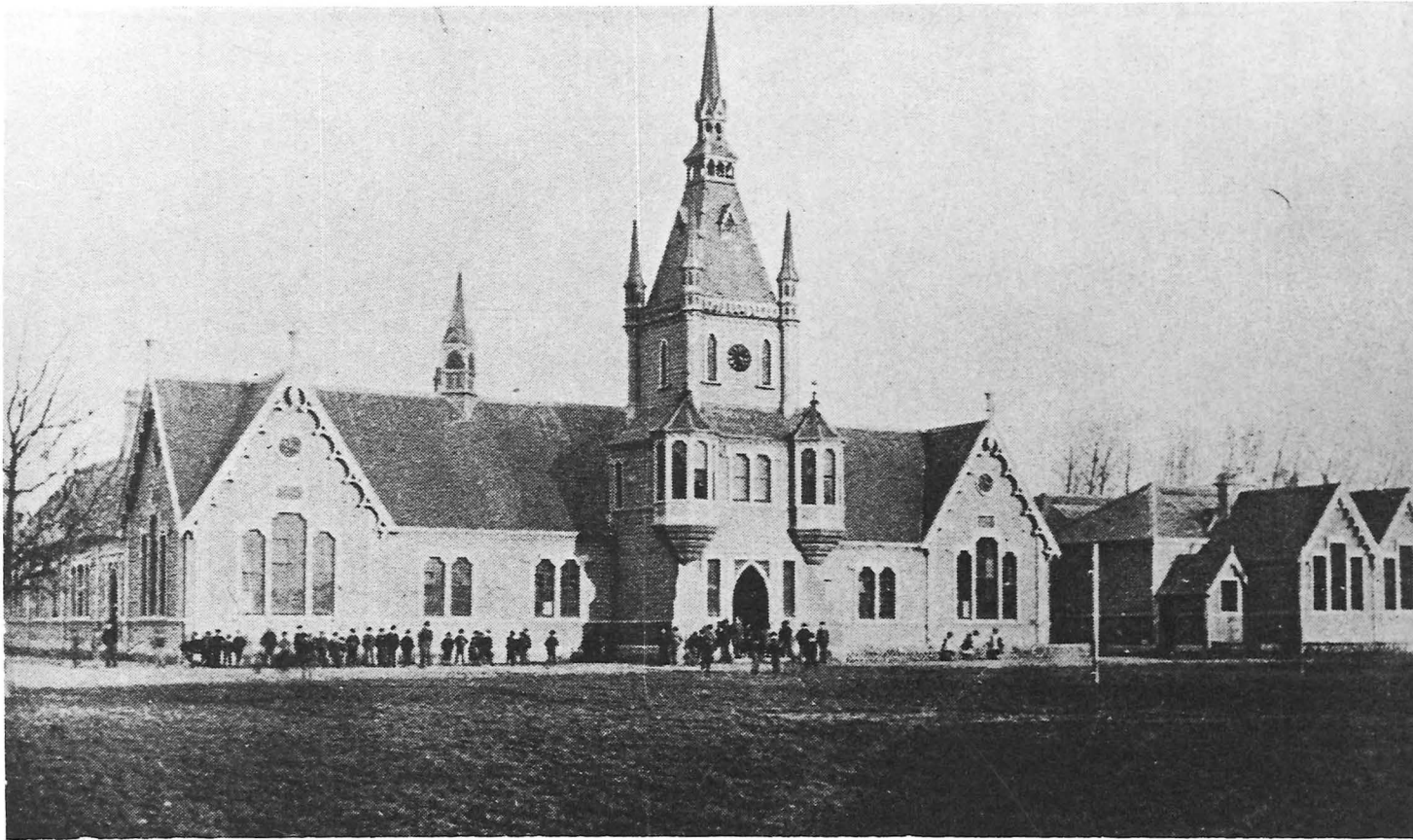
21. J. Anderson's warehouse and offices, Lichfield Street, Christchurch. 1979. On left.



22. Normal School, Cranmer Square, Christchurch. 1873-76. Elevation by S.C. Farr.

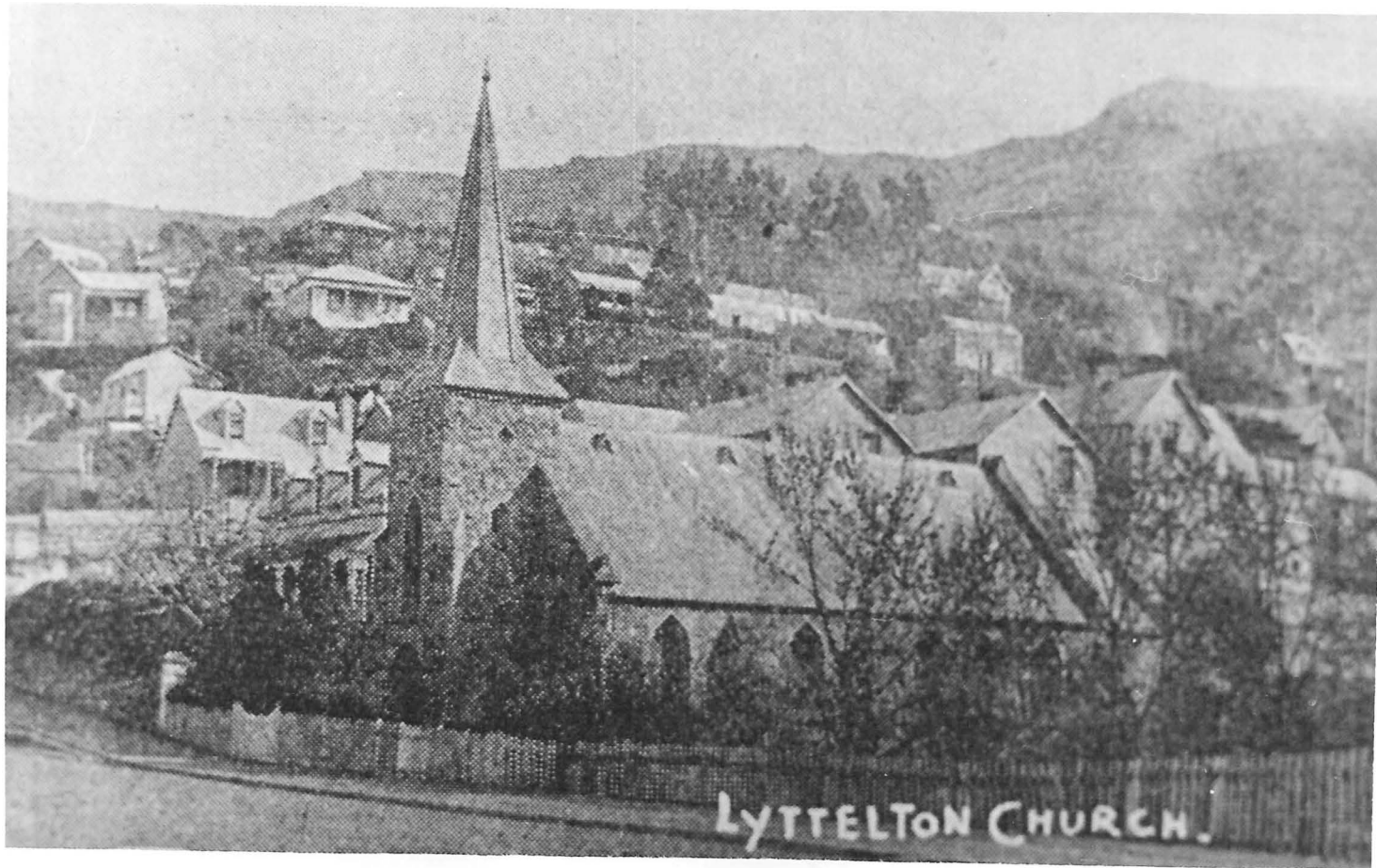


23. Normal School, Cranmer Square, Christchurch. 1873-76.

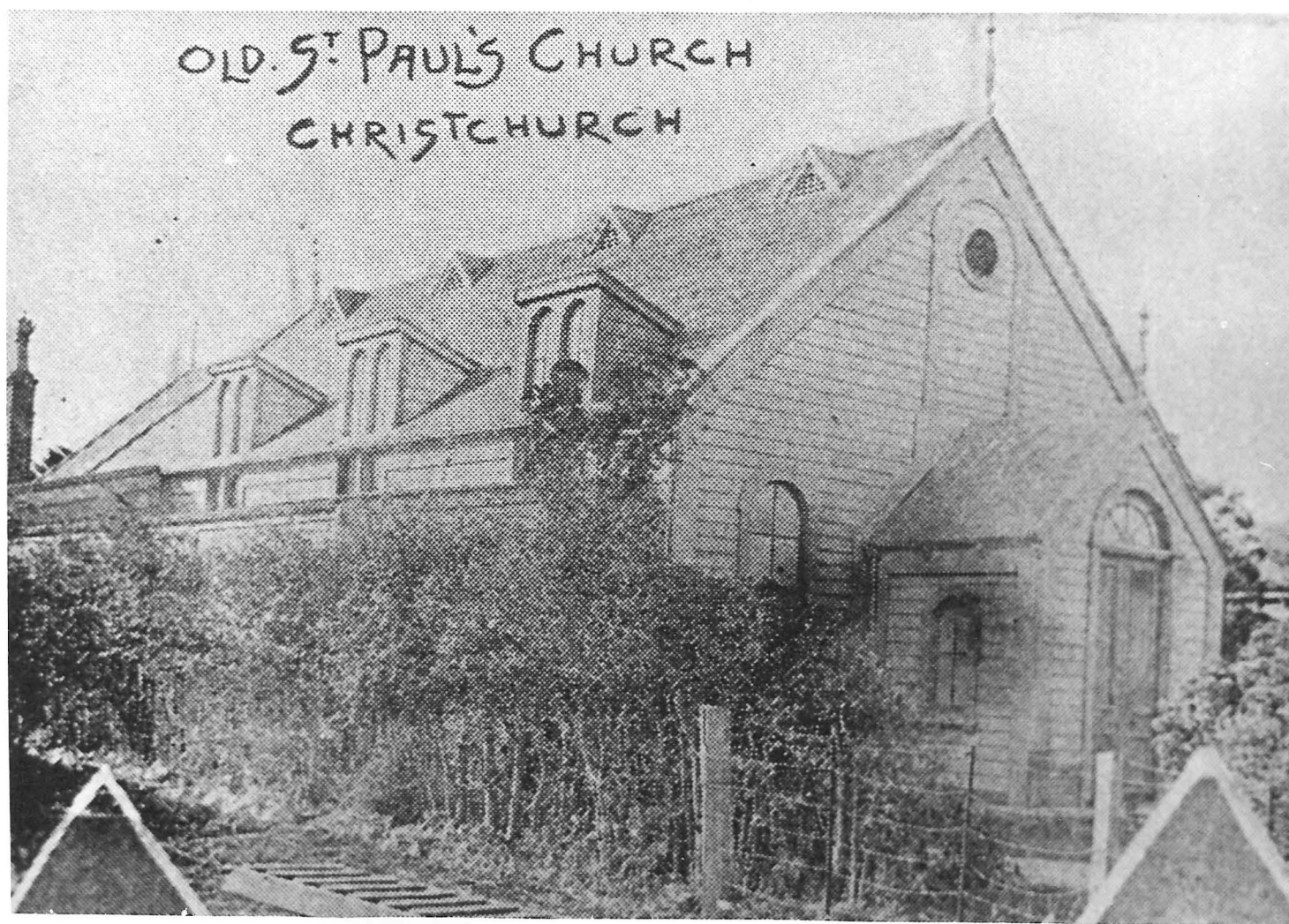


24. West Christchurch School, Hagley Avenue, Christchurch. 1873-74.





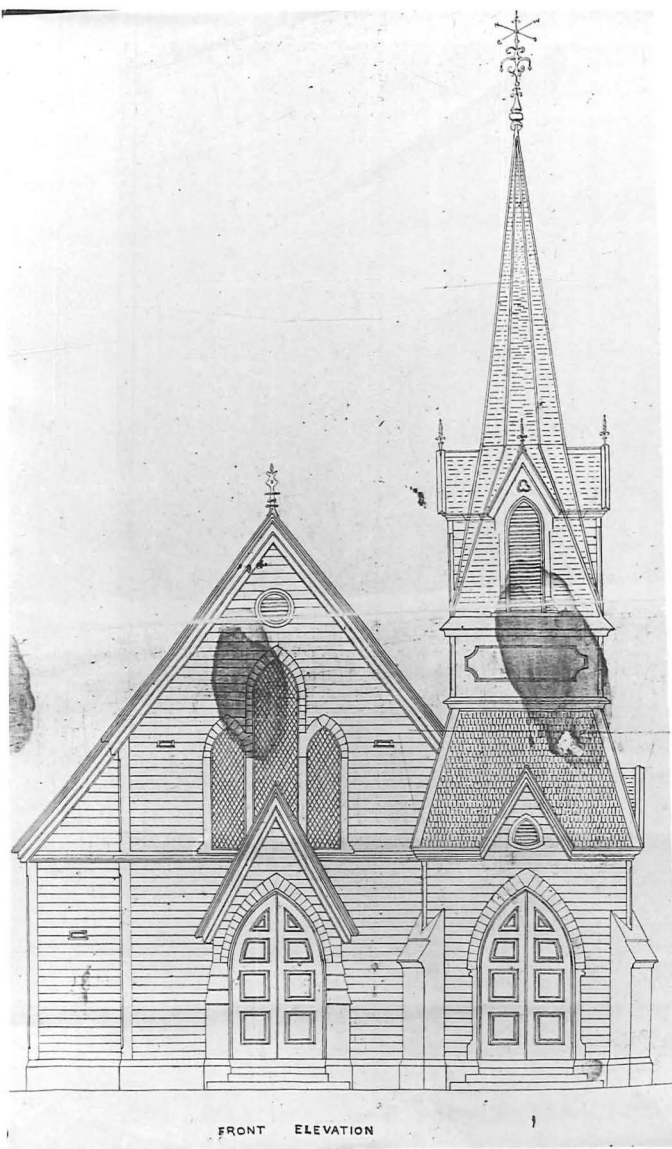
25. St John's Presbyterian Church, Lyttelton. 1864.



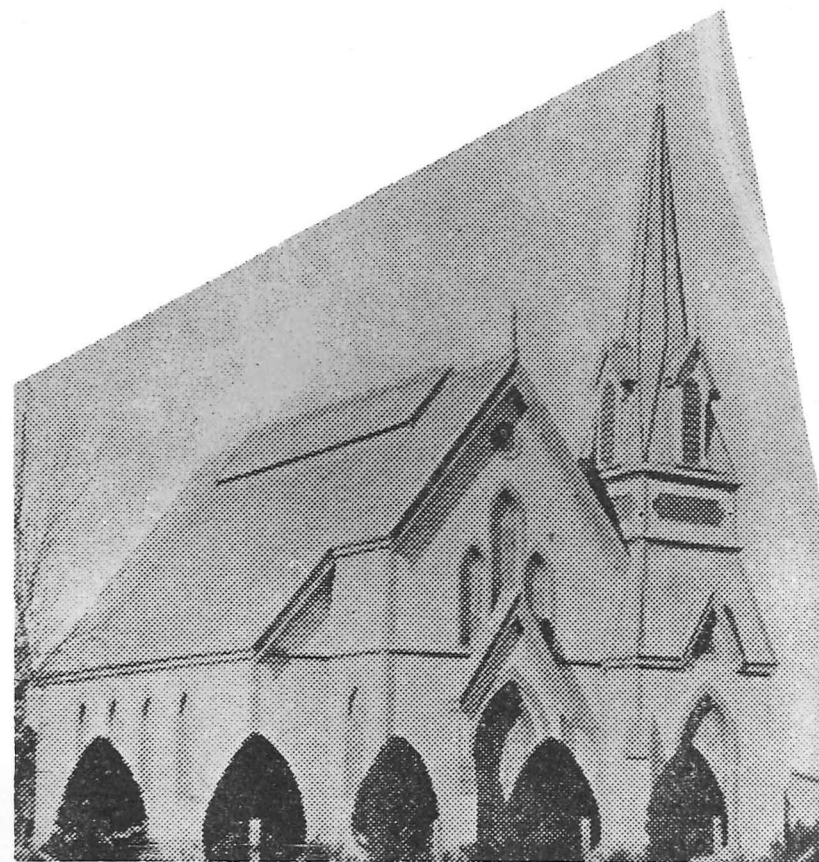
26. First St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, corner of Madras and Lichfield Streets, Christchurch. 1867.



27. St. John's Anglican Church, Leeston. 1872.

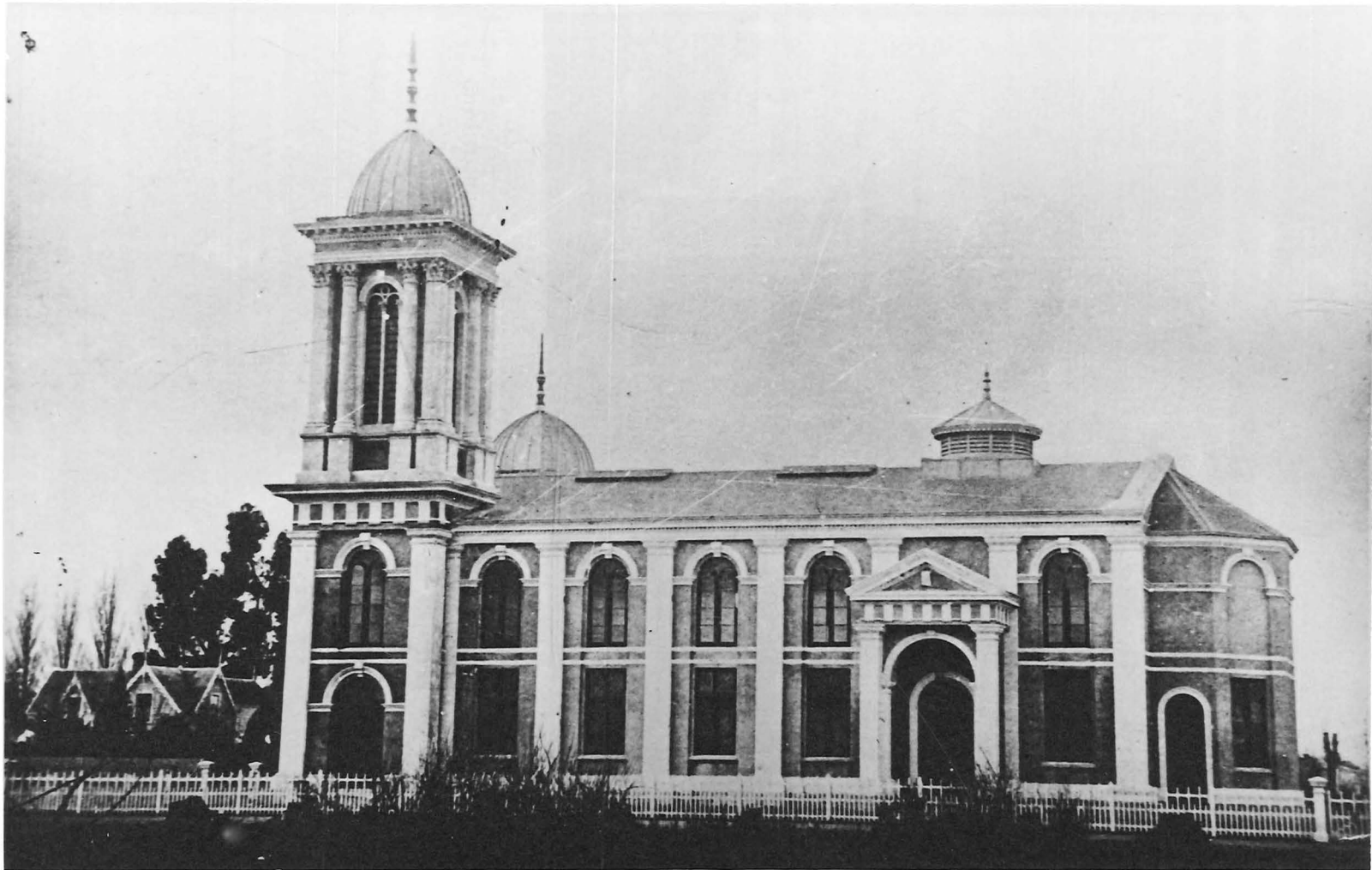


28. Presbyterian Church, Leeston. 1879.  
Elevation by S.C. Farr.



29. Presbyterian Church, Leeston. 1879.

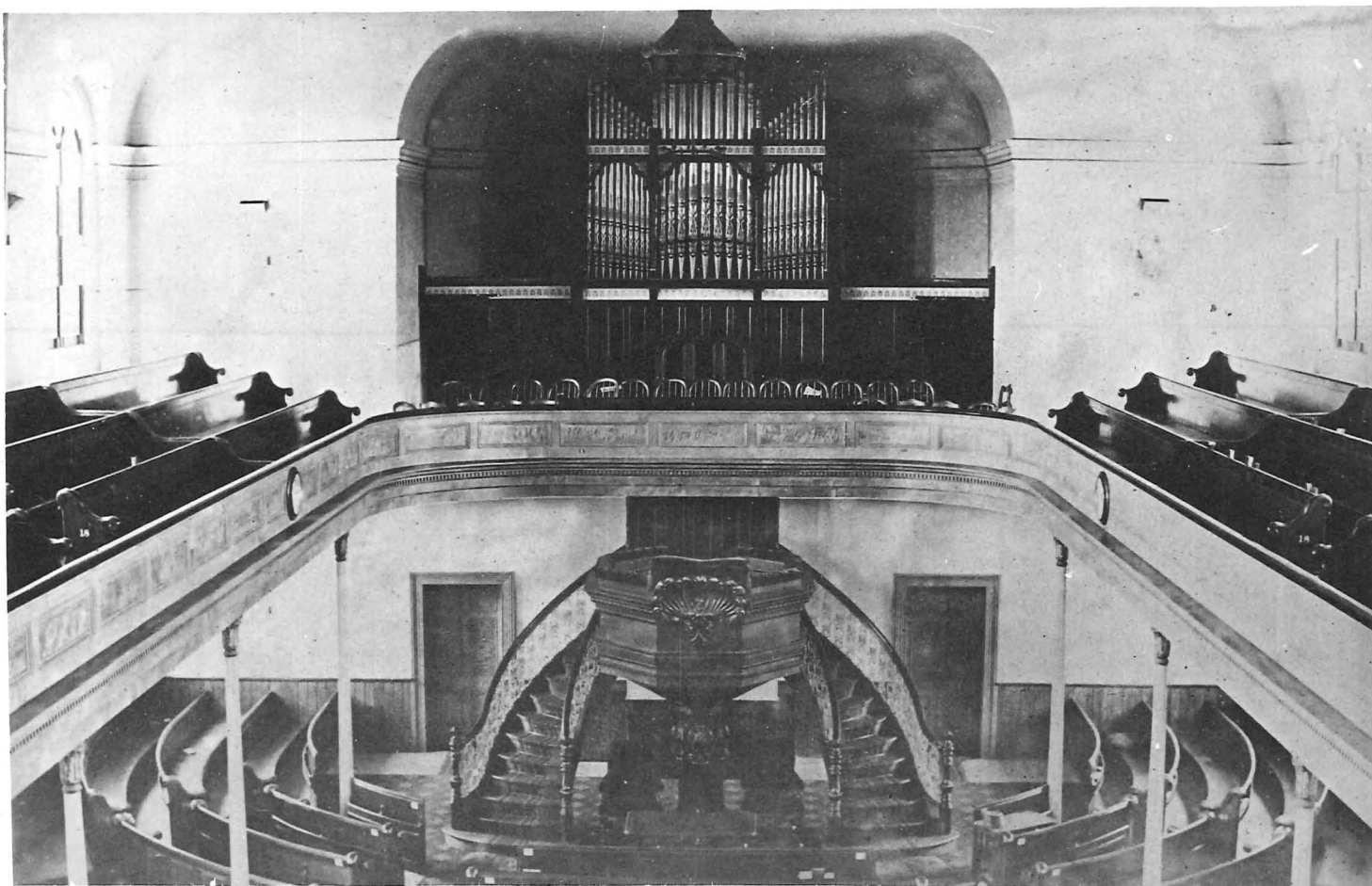




30. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, corner Madras and Cashel Street, Christchurch. 1876.



31. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, corner Madras and Cashel Streets, Christchurch. 1876.



32. St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, corner Madras and Cashel Streets, Christchurch. 1876.  
Interior.

# NORMAL SCHOOL.

TO BUILDERS.

PLANS and SPECIFICATIONS for the  
ERECTION of the NORMAL SCHOOL,  
Christchurch, can be seen at my office, where  
tenders will be received, on Monday, 1st  
September, at noon sharp.

The lowest or any tender not necessarily  
accepted.

S. C. FARR,

Architect.

Cookham House Chambers,  
30th July, 1873.

7-31 6014

33. An example of S.C. Farr's tender notices  
from The Press, 1873.

S. C. FARR,

Architect & Surveyor

LICHFIELD STREET,

CHRISTCHURCH,

NEXT THE ODD FELLOWS' HALL.

SPECIFICATIONS,

ESTIMATES,

AND

VALUATIONS.

34. S.C. Farr's advertisement in The Southern  
Provinces Almanac, 1863.